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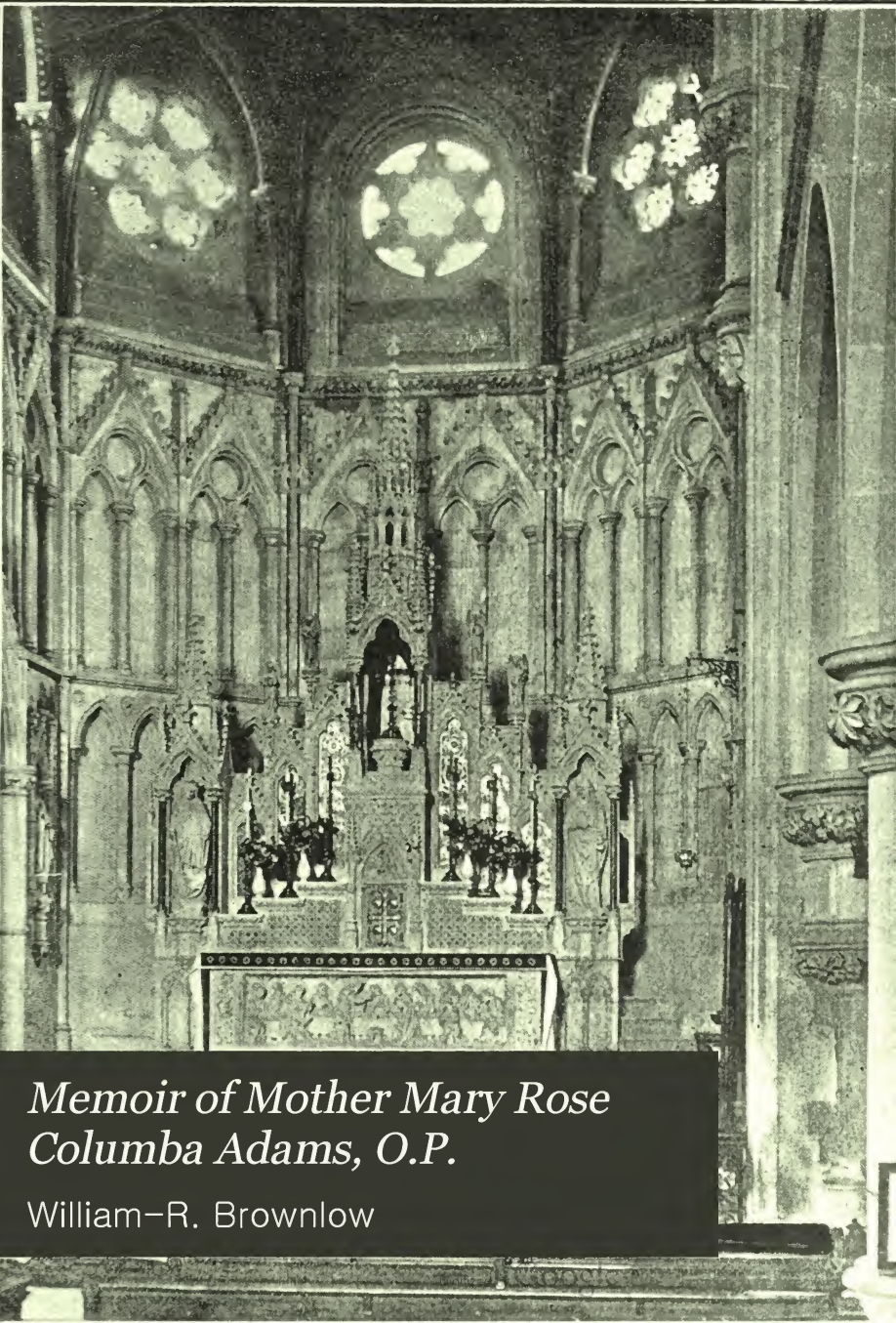
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*Memoir of Mother Mary Rose
Columba Adams, O.P.*

William-R. Brownlow



6/6

To dear Mother Augustine
a token of gratitude for her
kindness to my children both
at Upton & South Terrace.

Agnes Collins.

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MOTHER MARY ROSE COLUMBA ADAMS, O.P.

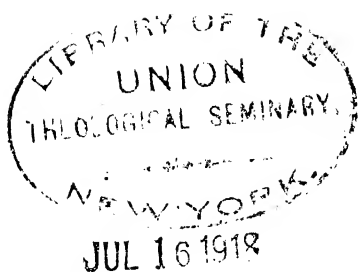
MEMOIR OF
MOTHER MARY ROSE
COLUMBA ADAMS, O.P.

FIRST prioress OF ST. DOMINIC'S CONVENT
AND foundress OF THE PERPETUAL ADORATION
AT NORTH ADELAIDE

BY THE
RIGHT REV. W. R. BROWNLOW, D.D.
BISHOP OF CLIFTON

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TO THE
DOMINICAN NUNS
OF PERPETUAL ADORATION,
NORTH ADELAIDE,
This Memoir
OF
THEIR BELOVED MOTHER AND FOUNRESS
IS
RESPECTFULLY AND AFFECTIONATELY
DEDICATED.

will, Alfred 2/9 March 26, 1918 (+)

P R E F A C E

THE Church sings of each of her Confessors, "*Non est inventus similis illi*"—"No one has been found like him"—and so there is an endless variety in forms of holiness, even in its heroic degree. "Star differeth from star in glory." As, in the material creation, the endless contrasts of form and shade of colour set forth in their harmonious variety the infinite beauty of God, so, in the creations of grace, no two souls are exactly alike, and each reflects in its own appointed way the glory of the King of saints. Hence it is always profitable to read the life of a faithful servant of God, even though we ourselves may be called to serve God in a different way. Those who have the privilege of a Religious vocation will often find much to help them in the lives of those who have served God in the world, while those whom God has called to glorify Him in domestic or in public secular life will frequently find themselves stimulated to piety and zeal by pondering over the holy actions and aspirations of those whose vocation is to the cloister. "Wisdom is justified of all her children." Still, some apology may be required when a new biography of a holy Religious is offered to the public.

The writer may, therefore, be allowed to confess that the first motive that induced him to undertake the present Memoir was the wish to console the spiritual daughters of Mother Rose Columba by putting on record as full an account as he could of their beloved Mother. But there were other reasons. The subject of this Memoir was not only a Religious, but also a Foundress, and that in Australia. We have had many most interesting biographies of holy Religious in America, from St. Rose of Lima downwards, but as yet we have not any biography which portrays for us Religious life in Australia. No doubt many such might be written, if Priests and Religious in the Colonies had more time to devote to writing. We may hope that this biography may call forth others, and lead to Catholic life in the Colonies being better known. Then, Mother Rose Columba was the first to commence at the Antipodes the work of the Perpetual Adoration of our Lord in the Blessed Sacrament. It did not seem fitting that the one whom God raised up to found a home for this great and beautiful work should pass away without some record being left of the steps by which she had been led to this important end.

The first thirteen chapters of this Memoir were finished a year ago. The writer's appointment to the See of Clifton, and the necessary press of work consequent on that appointment, prevented the last chapter being written until the present year. In some respects the delay has been of advantage, although several of

those whose names appear in the earlier chapters have been taken away during the last twelve months.

The writer desires especially to acknowledge his obligations to the late Mother Francis Raphael Drane, whose writings have done so much for Catholic literature, and whose Memoir, with her "Spiritual Notes and Letters," are now before the public. She read the whole of the first thirteen chapters, and supplied much important information. The late Mrs. Self, of Torquay, gave most of the details of Miss Adams' early life. Many of the Sisters at Stone, and other friends, have given very valuable assistance; and the Sisters in Adelaide have done everything they could to help forward the labour of love that it has been to the writer to gather up the precious memorials of a most sweet and beautiful character. He is only afraid lest his unskilful pen should produce an erroneous and distorted likeness of this saintly daughter of St. Dominic.

✠ W. R. B.

CLIFTON, *Passion-Tide*, 1895.

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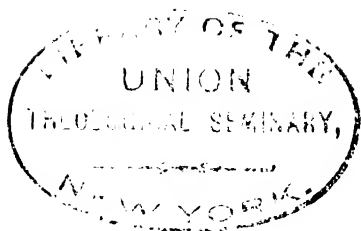
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MEMOIR OF MOTHER MARY ROSE COLUMBA ADAMS, O.P.

CHAPTER I

HER EARLY LIFE—DRAWING OF DIVINE GRACE —CONVERSION

SOPHIA CHARLOTTE LOUISA ADAMS was born on March 21, 1832, at Tower House, Woodchester, near Stroud, Gloucestershire. Her father, James Smith Adams, Esq., had gone out to India in early life, where he had married twice. He had two children by his first wife, and after her death he married Elizabeth Emma, eldest daughter of James M'Taggart, Esq., of Calcutta. By this lady he had two sons and four daughters, of whom the third is the subject of this memoir. Mr. Adams, on leaving India, came to live at Woodchester, where his own father had lived and died. Mrs. Adams died in 1843, at the age of thirty. She was a very accomplished woman, and from her Sophy inherited her taste for painting. She was a mere child when she lost her mother, but she had a great love for her; and after her death her home affections and recollections centred

A

in her father, to whom she was devotedly attached. She was considered to be his favourite daughter; at any rate, it fell to her lot to attend to all her father's wishes, to be always at his beck and call, and to read to him and amuse him in his leisure hours. They were educated partly at school and partly at home, and the girls seem to have shared their brothers' fondness for outdoor pursuits. All who knew Miss Sophy Adams in the days of her youth speak of her love for horses and dogs, her skill in the management of her horse, and her fearless riding across country. An intimate friend of her girlhood says, "There is little to tell. She took the 'daily round' of life in a country village, and spent it in home duties and outdoor pleasures. She cared little for the gay world, and only entered on it when her uncle Mr. McTaggart got tickets for the theatre and took her away with him. But she was generally the one who stayed at home with her father, who was often very exacting, but very fond of her. Many were the hair-breadth escapes she and I have had when she was afraid of not being in time to read when he awoke from his long after-dinner nap. . . . Yet she enjoyed life as she found it—balls, dances, theatres, &c. She was so *very* beautiful, that often when she went to a theatre she was the object of all eyes and opera-glasses, and yet she never seemed to notice it; and she spent hardly anything on dress, in order to have the money to give to the poor." She did not often talk about her early

days, but many years afterwards she wrote to a friend:—

“I remember, when I was quite young, I and my uncle going to the opera. It was a beautiful May evening. There was the usual crush, and so the carriage had to wait for its turn; and the thought of the worldly difference between those outside the carriage and those in it came home to me. I wondered why there should be that difference.”

The words that follow in the letter, which will be given later on, could not have occurred to the mind of a young girl; but the above are quoted to show something of the thoughts that were, before she was eighteen, forming themselves in Sophy Adams' mind. Her friend says, “There was nothing which one could call deeply religious in either of us.” The Rector of Woodchester was a pious Evangelical, and used to hold prayer-meetings in cottages, at which old men used to pray in a manner that excited the amusement rather than the reverence of these young ladies; and once, when they excused themselves from going on the plea that it was too cold, the worthy man reprovingly answered, that it was their hearts that were too cold. Still, many a time, when to all appearance “she was more gipsy than nun, loving her freedom, and going about on her high-spirited horse, followed by her large dog, quite alone,” she was really on some errand of mercy, carrying some delicacy to a sick person, or going to read to some poor old man or woman. At that time she knew nothing of the Catholic religion; but divine grace

must have been working very powerfully in her heart from her early childhood. She said of herself:—

“As a child, I had a terrible sense of sin; and I used to long to have lived in the times when sacrifices were offered, or when the Apostles were upon earth. Even after childhood was passed I would not *wilfully* commit *sin*, or what I considered sin. Unfortunately our instructions, and even instincts, were terribly misty. Looking back, I have very much to lament, and I may add, from personal knowledge, very much to be grateful for. If my surroundings had been different, and my instincts about some things less sharp and clear, of course there might have been much more to regret. I take no praise to myself. External circumstances, and, yet more, the goodness of God, were my protection. I do not think I knew what a fear was; and yet, from the time that I was eighteen, I was, I may say, without any sort of guide but instinct and conscience. An undefined idea of a higher life often presented itself to me, though I fear it got but little attention; and when my brother, of whose death I have just heard (Sept. 4, 1876), wished me to leave my father's house, that I might lead a more religious life, I told him I should like to board in a Roman Catholic Convent. To this he would lend no helping hand. I was then not more than eighteen.”

“I remember a time when I was a Protestant, and could not help praying all day. Of course it was all delusion.”

This last reflection is more severe than just. It was no delusion for a fearless high-spirited girl, in the bloom of youth and beauty, to have passed unscathed through the perilous years of opening womanhood. That incessant impulse to prayer was doubtless the means of keeping her warm, generous heart from

wasting its affections on worthless objects, and preserving it for the entire self-sacrifice for which our Lord was even then preparing her. For so is fulfilled the words of the prophet, "I will lead the blind into the way which they know not; and in the paths which they were ignorant of I will make them walk: I will make darkness light before them, and crooked things straight: these things have I done to them, and have not forsaken them."¹ To those out of the communion of the Church the only real means of union with God is prayer; and though prayer itself is a field upon which our arch-enemy often contrives to introduce dangerous illusions, it would be a fatal and most untrue judgment to set down the prayer of an earnest Protestant as "all delusion."

Another glimpse at her early spiritual life is afforded by the following reminiscence:—

"As a child, I was considered over-thoughtful; and one of the things which I used to like was to dwell upon the words of Scripture. And now old thoughts return, perhaps because I have not had any one to whom I could 'think aloud' for many years. The whole of Scripture history and Scripture teaching point to love and confidence."

The reader will remember the well-known passage of Father Faber on the "uncommon beauty and marvellous English of the Protestant Bible," how—

"It lives on in the ear, like a music that can never be forgotten, like the sound of church bells which the convert

¹ Isa. xlii. 16.

hardly knows how he can forego. . . . The memory of the dead passes into it. The potent traditions of childhood are stereotyped in its verses. The power of all the griefs and trials of a man is hidden beneath its words. It is the representative of his best moments ; and all that there has been about him of soft, and gentle, and pure, and penitent, and good, speaks to him for ever out of his English Bible. . . . It has been to him all along as the silent, but oh, how intelligible, voice of his guardian angel."

Still, as F. Faber says, "All this is an unhallowed power." That is, "There is no blessing of the Church along with it." And he does not hesitate to say, "though speaking humanly :"—

"The extinction of the establishment would be a less step towards the conquest of the national mind, than if it were possible to adopt that Bible, and correct it by the Vulgate."—*Life and Letters*, p. 395.

Her love of Holy Scripture never died away, but rather grew more and more strong, as she meditated upon the sacred words in the light of the true Faith, and in the Sacramental Presence of the Word made Flesh.

The Catholic Mission at Woodchester was founded by the late Mr. William Leigh of Woodchester Park, who invited there, in 1846, Father Dominic, the holy Passionist who received John Henry Newman into the Church. By degrees a small congregation was collected, and the Church of the Annunciation was solemnly consecrated on October 1, 1849, and Bishop Ullathorne preached there on the following Sunday. In 1850 the Visitor of the Passionists objected to

the Fathers taking charge of a mission and parochial work. Mr. Leigh insisted, and the consequence was an amicable arrangement by which they should remove to Broadway, where they still are, and Mr. Leigh offered the church and buildings to the Dominicans, who were just at that time looking out for a place where they could establish a Novitiate, in which the rule of St. Dominic could be strictly observed. The Dominican Fathers took possession on October 8, and the Master-General, Père Jandel, sent Brother Thomas Burke from St. Sabina to be Vice-Novice Master, in 1851.

The building of a Catholic Church in a village like Woodchester, especially when every one was talking about the conversion of Newman and his friends, could not fail to make a stir among the inhabitants. The Passionist Fathers then wore their habits out of doors; and the circle of young ladies, to which the Misses Adams belonged, were at first only diverted by their strange appearance. One of them, who was very clever, used to compose verses supposed to have been written by the Fathers, and addressed to some of these mischievous young people. However, ridicule and curiosity led to closer acquaintance.

Sophy Adams and her eldest sister Cecilia persuaded their brother to take them one evening to the service, probably Compline and Benediction. The girls had fur tippets on, and the scent of the incense stuck to them after they got home, and they were in considerable consternation whether their father

would suspect where they had been.. Miss Cecilia seems to have made the acquaintance of some of the Passionist Fathers, and the first time that Sophy spoke to a Catholic priest was when she met the Passionist Father Honorius as she was visiting a poor Irish woman named Nellie Holmes. This must have been in 1849, as the Passionists left in the following year. The young ladies seem to have resented the removal of the Passionists; and the first time Sophy Adams saw one of the Dominicans in the road along which she was riding, she felt inclined to ride over him. Miss Cecilia had, however, made further progress. She seems to have put herself regularly under instruction; for Father Austin Maltus, O.P., when he spoke to her in 1851, found her quite ready to be received. Father Austin's account of the matter is so graphic that it will be best told in his own words:—

“In the year 1851 I met Cecilia Adams riding on the old Roman Road running between Woodchester and our Priory. Later on I again met her out riding, and urged her to examine into the truths of the Catholic religion—as I had previously heard that she was favourably disposed—and told her that if she did she would be convinced and desire to be received into the Church. I met her again after that, and she said she wished to become a Catholic, but would prefer to be received by Father —, the Passionist, with whom she had become acquainted. ‘By all means,’ I replied, ‘only do not delay.’ She promised to go to Broadway, where he was living, which she did very soon after our interview. Whether he received her without giving her a course of instructions, I do not know. After

her return home she one day brought her younger sister Sophie, who was then about eighteen, and introduced her to me, when, having had some conversation with her, she decided to put herself under my instruction. After she had paid me a few visits, accompanied by Cecilia, her venerable father got wind of what was going on. This would be in the month of May 1851. I had arranged for them to come to the old Priory; the new one was being built, but not yet ready for habitation. On that particular morning we had High Mass, and were in choir. We heard the outer church-door open, and hurried footsteps come up the nave to the chancel steps. It was old Mr. Adams. He called out with a loud voice, 'Where is my daughter Sophie? What have you done with her? I demand her to be given up to me.' The Provincial, then Father Aylward, was in the choir, and went down at once to the chancel gates—'I beg your pardon, sir, I do not know to whom you refer.' (He had not been long with us, and was as yet ignorant of what was going on.) The old gentleman shouted, 'You do know—you must know; what have you done with my daughter Sophie?' 'Really, sir,' said the Provincial, 'I am perfectly ignorant of anything regarding your daughter.' 'Where, then,' he cried out very excitedly—'where is that man Father Austin?' Hearing my name mentioned, I went to the chancel gates, and said quietly to him, drawing him away to beneath the tower and near the sacristy, 'If you will go with me to the old Priory, I think, by this hour, we shall find your two daughters have arrived, and I feel sure you will learn through your daughter Sophie that no compulsion has been exercised in her regard.' 'Very well, sir, show me where she is.' So off we went to the old Priory, and on entering the guest-room we found the two delinquents had arrived, and were waiting for me. I lost no time, but said at once to Sophie, 'Your dear father seems to think that we have used unjustifiable means to compel you to come to us, and have somehow

got you under our influence, so that you cannot escape from it. You had better, therefore, frankly assure your dear parent that it is entirely by your own freewill that you have put yourself under my instruction, and desire to be received into the Catholic Church, after the course I am giving you is finished.' She promptly responded, 'You may rest satisfied, my dear father, that no enticement or compulsion has been used. It is by my own free choice that I have placed myself under the instruction of Father Austin; so convinced am I of the truth of the Catholic religion that I am resolved to embrace it, and no opposition will prevent my doing so. I know very well what I am doing; there is no misunderstanding on my part.' 'But, my dear Sophie, you are young, under age, and owe obedience to my wishes.' 'Yes, I am young in age, but am perfectly free to choose my own religion, and I am conscious that salvation depends upon my embracing the truth and worshipping God rightly.' 'You hear, then, Mr. Adams,' I said, 'that on our part we have used no unjust means to deceive your dear daughter, but it is her own free act.' After making other remarks to try and dissuade her from taking the step, for I believe he loved her very tenderly, he went away and came no more to us. After finishing her instruction, I received her into the Church,¹ then prepared her carefully for making her first communion, which she did with great fervour. I forget how often I admitted her to communion; but most probably, for a time, it was once a fortnight, then once in a week, then at length more frequently. Her intelligence, character, and solid fervour, also freedom in her social position, made it easier to admit her to receive our dear Lord with comparative frequency. In the year 1852 I became invalided, and Mr. and Mrs. Leigh very kindly invited me to the Park for a while. Father Aylward, then the Superior, very readily consented. Archbishop

¹ On August 23, 1851.

Nicholson was staying there at the time, broken down with paralysis. I continued in my impaired health for months, still staying on by their request. In the meanwhile, Sophie had been introduced to Mr. and Mrs. Leigh, and Beatrice, their only surviving daughter, also to the present Mr. Leigh, their son. During the summer she was invited to spend a few weeks with them. Beatrice and she became great friends and loving companions. Sophie was most amiable and charming in her ways, so it was not surprising that Mr. and Mrs. Leigh loved her as a daughter. While she was with them they arranged a carriage tour through Wales, to be away about a week. Cecilia Adams was also invited to join the party. It was decided that Mr. and Mrs. Leigh, Sophie, and I should go in the carriage, Cecilia and Beatrice riding good strong ponies. We were to cross the river Severn at a ford, the name of which I forget now; there was a ferry-boat for carriages there, so we were able to cross comfortably without getting out. The ponies with their riders were being led across by the men. All went well for a while; but the water getting deeper, the men suggested that Cecilia and Beatrice should leave the saddles and mount upon their backs. It was an adventure too good for young spirits to refuse; so on to the strong backs of the men they mounted, and were safely conveyed to the opposite shore, the ponies being led up the bank by the men, and so we proceeded on our tour.

"From the time of Sophie's reception into the Church to this visit to the Leighs, it became evident that all her aspirations were to become a Religious in some Order. I had got acquainted with Mother Margaret of Stone. I was desirous that Sophie also should make her acquaintance by paying her a visit and conferring with her about making a trial of her vocation if she felt herself attracted to the Order, and Mother Margaret was willing that she should do so.

"From the first at Woodchester, where I made her acquaintance, I always esteemed her for what I may

truly term her noble, amiable, and lovable character, and for her high abilities, which, after maturing a while, fitted her for governing a community. Both Mother Margaret and Mother Imelda saw these qualities develop in her, and made use of them."

It must be remembered that 1851 was the year when England was still full of the excitement of "Papal Aggression" agitation. It was a time when the conversion of a member of a Protestant family caused an outburst of angry feeling such as is seldom caused now. Sophy Adams' youthful friends were interdicted from speaking to her, and even her father's affection did not exempt her from domestic discord, which made it impossible for her to live at home. Her own feeling about it will be best seen by the following extract from a letter written more than twenty years afterwards:—

"No other place, however much it may be in our own hands, can be like our father's house: no place so answers to the name of *home*, however circumstances may have changed, and however little of a home it may have become. I remember well the night when I felt that my father's house was no longer my home. It was the first time in my life that I knew what 'scalding tears' meant. But I was very happy too; for even then I felt it was little to give up in return for the gift of faith. Besides, I was not *turned out*, only made to go by constant attacks upon religion; which I could not endure to hear."

It must have been about this time that she spent some weeks at Exeter, where she used to attend the

old chapel in the Mint. It was whilst staying there that she paid her first visit to the place where her lot was cast for so many years. She rode over from Exeter to see the steeplechases at St. Mary Church ; and, in spite of the remonstrances of the groom, insisted upon remaining on horseback, at the imminent risk of being run away with when the racing began. Little did she ever dream then of the years of patient labour that she was to spend within a few hundred yards of the course.

After staying some time at Exeter, the young ladies returned to Gloucestershire, and Miss Cecilia took a house near Woodchester, and Miss Sophy lived with her. A little chapel had been opened at Nymphsfield by Mr. Leigh, and in 1853 Father Thomas Burke, who had been ordained priest on Easter Sunday in that year, was appointed to take charge of it. He was a great deal at Woodchester Park, having undertaken the somewhat tiresome office of secretary to the paralysed Archbishop of Corfu, mentioned in Father Maltus' letter. Father Antoninus Williams, the present Prior of Hawkesyard, says that he and Father Pius Cavanagh, then novices, were Father Burke's choristers. Sophy Adams used to look after the little Chapel and its decorations. He says, "Even in those days one could see that Sophy Adams had cultivated habits of recollection and devotion. She was thoroughly devoted to Holy Church." It was at this time that she became acquainted with Father Thomas Burke, and her quick intelligence eagerly drank in the lofty ideal of the

religious life which Father Burke never failed to set before those who listened to him. They continued warm friends to the last; and when the subject of this memoir was bidding farewell to all she loved in England, the news of Father Burke's death added an additional sorrow to her affectionate heart.

When we read what impression she made upon others at this time, we shall know how to interpret her own self-condemnatory words: "The two first years after I became a Catholic were, perhaps, the two most unsatisfactory of my life. Of course, *mea culpa*." No doubt they seemed unsatisfactory to her, because she had not yet found in her vocation to religion that safe refuge from the snares of the world for which her soul was yearning.

It could hardly have happened that so attractive a girl, with a fortune of her own, should have failed to have had special attentions paid to her by persons of the opposite sex; and occasionally her friends used to banter her about Mr. This or That. But frank and confiding as she always was to all, she never appeared to have had even a passing wound from the common passion; and when she entered religion she could look back on her whole youth and write distinctly: "One thing more I will add, I could bring (God) a whole heart too; for it was never given to any one." To whom then was it given? . She shall answer herself:—

"Well! 'All passes,' as St. Teresa says; and I may also add, 'God never changes.' What a rest that is!

to know and to feel that there is One Perfect and Immutable Being! I am very fond of the *Tu solus Sanctus*, &c., in the *Gloria*. I suppose it is a very human feeling! But there is a joy in knowing that there is One who cannot disappoint. who can never in the smallest degree be unworthy of entire adoration, who may be loved and worshipped—nay more, that it is the creature's privilege to love and worship—and who alone can satisfy its longings."

CHAPTER II

1856-1859

*RELIGIOUS VOCATION—STONE—MOTHER MARGARET
—NOVITIATE—PROFESSION—EARLY RELIGIOUS
LIFE—RETREAT BY BISHOP ULLATHORNE*

IT is almost impossible to speak too highly of the blessedness of a religious vocation. It cannot be imagined that all the Holy Fathers and Doctors of the Church have fallen into a mistake in the strong language that they have used in praise of the virginal life. The Apostle St. Paul lays down: "The virgin thinketh on the things of the Lord: that she may be holy both in body and in spirit."¹ Hence, as St. Alphonsus says, "The state of virgins consecrated to Jesus Christ, and who are entirely devoted to His divine love, is of all states the most happy and sublime. They are not troubled with the cares of a house, a family, and a husband; their sole concern, the sole desire of their hearts, is to please Jesus Christ, to whom they have dedicated their souls and bodies and all their affections."² Its advantages are forcibly set forth by one whose words are attributed to St. Bernard: "Is not this religion a holy state,

¹ 1 Cor. vii. 34.

² "True Spouse of Christ," chap. i. 2.

in which man lives more purely, falls more rarely, rises more quickly, walks more cautiously, is bedewed with grace more frequently, rests more securely, dies more confidently, passes through purgatory more speedily, and is rewarded more abundantly?"¹ We have seen that the subject of this memoir was considered by her spiritual guide to have a vocation to religion. After her death he wrote of her :—

"She was a grand soul. Her baptismal innocence was never lost. Hence, divine grace seemed to have no opposition made by a sin-wounded will. She had great natural endowments, all of which were drawn subjectively into the service of grace."

Her earliest Catholic associations were connected with the Dominican Order. We must always regret the "temporary suspension of the *Atlantis*," which lost us a paper on "The Mission of St. Dominic" from that master-hand that traced so exquisitely "The Mission of St. Benedict."² However, we possess the "Life of St. Dominic," and the recent example of the marvellous adaptation of his spirit to the wants of our own day by the greatest Dominican of modern times, Père Lacordaire; and, in our own language, the accomplished pen of one of his spiritual daughters has given us "The History of St. Dominic." From these works it is not difficult to gather such an idea of St. Dominic's spirit as will account for the special

¹ *Inter opp. S. Bern.*, tom. iii. p. 1211, Ed. Mediol.

² Newman's "Historical Sketches," iii. p. 370.

attraction that the Order had for the subject of this memoir. As soon as she embraced the Catholic Faith, she was possessed with an intense hatred of heresy, which she regarded as a personal insult to God, the Truth itself. When Pope Honorius III. granted St. Dominic the Bull of Confirmation of his Order, he said in it: "We, considering that the Religious of your Order should be *the champions of the Faith and the true luminaries of the world*, confirm your Order." The motto of the Order is "VERITAS." The scientific precision with which the truth is set forth, especially by the Angelic Doctor, has always been the glory of the Dominican Order. The clear brightness and the inimitable strength of the diamond combined with the almost feminine tenderness of its founder, have led Lacordaire to sum up his character as, "Strong as a diamond, more tender than a mother." And few could have known the subject of this memoir without noticing in her a similar union of strength and even sternness with the most tender and delicate sympathy for others. Then, again, the "Third Order of St. Dominic" is called "The Order of Penance," and the spirit of penance, which characterises all true sons and daughters of St. Dominic, had a special attraction for her. In after-times she formed lasting friendships with Religious of many other Orders, and she admired and appreciated the spirit of all. And yet, she never returned from intercourse with those whom she loved and revered the most in other Orders without being

more and more grateful to God for her own Dominican vocation.

The Dominican Order has always made much of external ceremonies; and the profound inclinations, the processions, and even the rites peculiar to the Order, were all matters of great interest to her; and she never shared the wish, sometimes expressed even by Dominicans, that their rite should be conformed to the Roman rubrics. She was not musical herself, but she appreciated the importance of music in the service of God. She possessed great taste and skill in painting and illuminating, and the intimate connection of the Dominican Order with Christian Art, from Fra Angelico down to Père Besson, was one of the minor attractions which endeared the Order to her.

What were the special circumstances and the steps by which she was led to obey the vocation, we know not. She seems to have had an interview with Mother Margaret Hallahan, either at Clifton or elsewhere, and at once to have arranged for going to Stone. One incident of the anxious time, when her spiritual guide could not see his way to giving the decisive word that should set her free to follow her vocation, has been preserved. Unable to bear the suspense any longer, she went to Father Austin one day, and said, "Father, I am going up to London for the season." "You will do no such thing," he replied. It brought matters to a crisis, however, and he gave his consent to her going to Stone.

The Novitiate of the nuns of the Third Order of St. Dominic was removed from Clifton to Stone, in Staffordshire, in July 1853. The foundation-stone of St. Dominic's Church was laid on August 4, St. Dominic's Day; and the Church was solemnly opened on May 3, 1854, when Dr. Ullathorne, Bishop of Birmingham, sang Pontifical High Mass, and Father Newman of the Oratory preached, coming over from Dublin especially for the occasion. In April 1855 the west wing, including the refectory and new novitiate, was opened. Thus, the now stately Convent, with its various divisions and offices, was in a very incomplete condition when Sophy Adams made her first appearance there, on December 27, 1855. On January 8, 1856, she was received as a postulant, and placed under the care of Sister Mary Philomena Berkeley, whose saintly life and holy and happy death left a sweet and indelible impression on the new postulant's memory.

Miss Sophy Adams had not left her father's house in order to seek a well-furnished abode where personal comforts would abound; and the unfinished Convent was probably more to her taste than it would have been in its present beautifully arranged state. But she found something there that she had not known since she was quite a child: she found a mother's heart open to receive her; she found a friend by whom she was never misunderstood; one who knew how to foster and stimulate all the power of self-sacrifice there was in that heroic spirit; and to

correct, chasten, and prune away the undisciplined exuberances of that affectionate, sympathetic heart, without ever wounding its sensitiveness by the least suspicion of injustice. It was the crowning mercy of her life to have found Mother Margaret. Yet, to one who had for so long enjoyed her freedom, the probation must have been extremely severe. Mother Margaret wrote to a novice thus :—

“The end for which you have entered religion is, to become quite a new creature, and to be entirely transformed into Christ crucified. The cross and humiliation of Jesus must be your only aim. You are elected to be the spouse of Christ crucified, to follow Him in hunger and thirst, in nakedness and poverty, nay, even to death ; for I hold out no other inducements to you but the cross of Christ my beloved Spouse ; if His cross and His love will not content you, I have nothing else to offer.”¹

How far the new postulant responded to such teaching may be gathered from the account given by one of her contemporaries in the Novitiate. She writes :—

“Mother Rose Columba was one of my companions in the noviceship, where she gave much edification by her self-sacrifice and cheerfulness. One of her great trials was not being able to sing. The first time we met for a general practice of some part of the Office, she (then a postulant) felt it very much. Several of the novices and postulants had very good voices, and when it came to her turn to sing the prayer, she completely broke down, and asked to be

¹ “Life of Mother Margaret,” p. 262.

allowed to withdraw. The Novice-Mistress encouraged her to remain, and Mother Rose Columba told me afterwards that the singing would be a great trial to her. Still, she was always most punctual in coming to the practice, and was generally the first present, with her books, &c., ready, and she made great efforts to learn the proper way of singing the prayers and parts of the office.

"During the winter she had charge of the Novitiate, and had to make the fire and clean the stove. At this time she suffered much from chilblains, and her hands often bled where they had broken; but she would never accept any offers from her more fortunate companions to assist her in the work."

Another Sister writes:—

"I had known something in Leamington of one of her sisters, and it made a little tie between us when we met again under such different circumstances. One of the Fathers at Clifton first told me she was coming as a postulant to Stone, and he then said, 'Though she has not so long been in the Church, she has a great attraction for prayer; and I know that often she is a great part of the night watching and praying.'

"When I went to Stone from Clifton, she was a postulant, with Sister Mary Philomena as Novice-Mistress, who spoke of her as a soul of great promise, and one whom she thought would do much for the Order. Sister Mary Dominica said, 'One could hardly believe how quickly her exterior had changed from a fine lady to a quiet humble postulant.'"

When it is remembered how entirely she had been left to her own guidance, it will be evident that there would be very much to be corrected and brought into subjection to the law of Christ and religious rule.

But where there is true love of Jesus crucified, and real generosity of spirit, the hardest things become easy. It would seem that the generous heart of Mother Margaret had recognised at once in her young postulant a kindred spirit. Many years afterwards, in reply to a remark that she seemed to have been quite a "spoiled child" of her Superior, she replied:—

"You are mistaken if you think that our beloved Mother used to *pet* me. I *know* I was *specially loved* by her, for she told me so. But, as she herself said, she was a 'rough lover.' Anyhow, she led those she most loved by the rough ways of the holy cross. Sometimes she would say, after a severe reproof, 'Child ! if I did not love you, I should not say these things to you.' I often think that, if I have any *form*, it was given by the hammer and the chisel. Yet to *know* that one had the love of such a heart as hers was enough to help one through many difficulties. Often, when most weary of life, and most desirous to be set free, I remember our dearest Mother's last message to me—I was to 'get well and work.' I think I do work to the limits of my strength, but——"

After little more than four months, the postulant had the happiness of receiving the habit of St. Dominic, on May 13, 1856. She received the name of two saints of the Order, and was henceforth known as Sister Mary Rose Columba. Both her blessed patronesses were very dear to her; but her devotion was specially drawn out towards St. Rose of Lima, possibly, just then, by way of making reparation for some rash and ill-considered criticisms which had

recently been made upon her Life published by the Oratorian Fathers.

Among the few private papers found after her death were some dated 1856, apparently notes of a Retreat, with little prayers and aspirations of her own.

1856.

“God made our bodies out of the slime of the earth, and our souls He created out of nothing. He has given us a ray of His own understanding, that we may know Him ; also a rational will, that, knowing Him, we may love Him above ourselves, above all things. He has made us only a little lower than the angels. What return then ought we to make to Him for all that He has done for us ? What have I done hitherto ? what shall I do in future ? I will endeavour to walk more in the presence of God. I will offer Him my thoughts, words, and actions. Remembering that He has made me for Himself, I will often say to myself, Is what I am doing, saying, or thinking, pleasing in the sight of God ? God having made us for Himself, then we cannot find any true rest out of Him. All affection given to creatures is so much taken from God. God is to be loved for Himself alone ; creatures, in Him and for Him. Creatures are to be used to help us to serve God, not to draw us from Him. Examine whether your use of this or that creature aids or impedes your love of God. My God, I give Thee my heart ; take it and make it all Thine. ‘What hast thou which thou hast not received ? and if thou hast received it, why dost thou glory as if thou hadst not received it ?’ All you have is from God—your soul, your body, your will, your memory, your understanding, all are from God. The air you breathe, the bread you eat, all is from God. But all evil is from yourself—one who has long been an

exile from his home, when at last he finds himself on his way thither, with what joy, with what diligence does he hasten on his way! He is not drawn aside by any object, he is not stopped by any obstacle. As for the various objects he meets on the way—those which will assist him he uses; those which would retard him he leaves.

“Sin is an offence against God. It grieves the Holy Spirit; it wrongs the most Holy Trinity. It is the creature setting itself up against its Creator, preferring itself to God, worshipping itself instead of God. And this comes from pride. Of what can I be proud? Of my body? It was given me by God, and will become the food of worms. Of my soul? That, too, is God’s gift; and how often have I defiled it by sin! Of my will, my memory, my understanding? All these are from God; but how often have I used them to offend Him. Instead of being proud, let me humble myself in the dust before Him and before His creatures, and beg His pardon for having used His gifts to offend Him.

“I must one day die, I must leave all earthly things, and take with me only my works, be they good or evil. Oh, my God, write this truth upon my soul of the severity of the examination and of the final sentence. Oh my soul, in all thy doings remember thy last end, and thou wilt never sin.

“Under thy care and to thee, sweet Lady, I commend my resolution; get me the grace to persevere.

“One of the greatest causes of not advancing in perfection is the want of perseverance. To assist me I will frequently read my resolutions and say the *Veni Creator*. I will be more exact in making aspirations, and I will always make a distinct preparation for Holy Communion. Discouragement is a great hindrance. You will not arrive at union with God all at once. Be patient with self, acknowledge your own weakness, and confide in God. Do not give up because you fail even many times.”

Sister Rose Columba was received to Profession on May 26, 1857. One of her companions recalls the following points concerning this final dedication of herself to God :—

“I remember many Sisters being very much struck with her at the time of her profession. The guest-house was full of visitors, and her friends were in and out everywhere ; but all noticed her exceeding calmness, as if her whole soul was united to God, and separated from every earthly thought. I remember both our dearest Mother and Sister Mary Philomena spoke most highly of her in the Chapter (of election) for Profession, and she was immediately placed as second in the noviceship and head sacristan.”

The appointment to assist the Novice - Mistress immediately after her own profession was a high tribute to the exactness with which she had acquitted herself of her duties as a novice. But she was not yet quite qualified for the difficult task of training others, and Mother Margaret did not leave her in this office for more than two months. The fact is, that remarkable gift which she possessed of attracting others to herself must have been a somewhat dangerous power in the noviceship, and might easily have led to those particular friendships which are fatal to a true religious spirit. She had not yet learned how to use this power so as to lead souls to God, and not allow them to attach themselves to His creature, however worthy of love that creature may be. The vigilant eye of Mother Margaret was quick to detect such a tendency as this, and also prompt to apply the remedy.

The Sister who tells the tale is probably too severe upon herself:—

“During about a year or two she was with me in the school. She was most marked for her exactness to rule, her mortification, and her filling up *every* spare moment in the choir. At the same time she was very affectionate, and seemed to gain a power for good over all the children. For a short time she took the Sunday school; and Father Antoninus said that during that time she did immense good amongst the elder girls. She was most strict with them, and got several reforms in the way of their dress and behaviour. He was quite grieved when she left for Stoke, as, he said, she had done so much good in so short a time. I remember once Father Austin holding her up to me as an example. She had been suddenly changed from the sacristy, which she so much liked, to be assistant in the Pension School, and, he said, how perfectly she had acted about it.

“At that time our Mother thought that we were too naturally attached to each other; and as I was the eldest in religion, she was the most hard upon me, so I cut it short in an unkind way, and proclaimed poor Sister Rose Columba for it in chapter. She took it so well and so kindly. I think she understood me; but she felt it very much, and years afterwards said that I had given her then a very severe lesson.”

It is very probable that Sister Rose Columba was unconscious of her own attractiveness; and so long as no creaturely affection came between her and her divine Spouse, she did not consider what effect she might be having on others. She needed some sharp lesson like this to warn her that, even if others were no temptation to her, she might be to them. Her

ready sympathy and loving words and manner might easily lead people to think that she loved them for themselves, instead of for and in God.

At Stone she worked in the Girls' Poor School for some time, and then in a Middle Pension School, which they had then recently opened. She had never cared for children before she entered religion, and yet a very considerable part of her religious life was devoted to them. The friend of her youth, who had not seen her for many years, writes:—

“The first time I saw her here, she said, ‘Can you fancy me with children?’ I said, ‘No.’ She replied, ‘Much more at home with horses and dogs.’ I then said, ‘Why did you go into a Convent?’ Her face changed, and she said solemnly, ‘I felt it was the only way to save my soul.’”

She had not much opportunity of indulging her fondness for horses and dogs. On one occasion one of the pigs was sick, and through the absence of the man who usually looked after the animals, it fell to Sister Rose Columba's lot to give it medicine and look after it. Mother Margaret asked her how she liked it, and she had to acknowledge that it was a very uncongenial duty. “If it had been a horse, dear Mother, it would be quite different.” Mother Margaret laughed at her a good deal, as one animal seemed to her much like another.

When she left Woodchester to enter the Convent, it had been a matter of some difficulty as to how to

dispose of her favourite horse. Her relations did not like selling it, and still less shooting it. However, the animal settled its own destiny before a week had passed, by eating a quantity of laurel leaves which poisoned it.

The last time that she visited the home of her childhood was, either in 1859 or early in 1860, when her Superiors allowed her to go and see her father in his last illness, which terminated in his death, March 19, 1860, in his eightieth year. Her eldest half-sister kept house for her father, and she was very anti-Catholic. Her friend says, "Sophy told me that when she went home to nurse her father in his last illness, Mrs. M. never let her have one moment alone with him. The poor old man kept looking round to see if they were alone, and leaned back, and was silent. I wish I had been there; I would have secured her a private interview." However, it was not to be, and she returned sick at heart to her Convent. Some time afterwards she received intelligence of her father's death. It so happened that Mother Margaret was not at home, and immediately after receiving the letter she went into the school to teach. No doubt it was allowed with the kind intention of preventing her from brooding over her loss. But Mother Margaret would have known that, with a temperament such as hers, the best consolation would have been to have bidden her to go into the choir, and pour out her grief into the Sacred Heart of Him who is the Father of the fatherless, until she had obtained strength to resume her

ordinary avocations. Many years afterwards, when she lost her brother, she wrote to a friend :—

“God reward you for your promise of prayers. The thought that God loves our loved ones far better than we can even understand, and that His every act towards them is really an act of love, is no small source of comfort. I could write you a long pencil-note—but *please not to speak to me.*”

In the summer of 1859 a Retreat was given to the Community by Bishop Ullathorne. Her notes of the instructions will form a fitting conclusion to this imperfect sketch of her early religious life.

J. M. ✠ D. C.

GOD ALONE.

“Humility draws God to us. The proud He hates. Humility makes God forget our past sins. Be humble to every human creature for God’s sake. Receive every humiliation as a direct present from God, and be very grateful to any one who humbles you ; always remember it is the mercy of God that you are not consumed, and that if every creature rose up against you and loaded you with injuries, it would be no more than you deserve. Every office is too good for you. Always obey the Sister who is in office with you ; always yield to her wishes and opinion where you can do so conscientiously. Most humble Heart of Jesus, make my heart meek and humble. Most humble Virgin Mother of God, obtain for me the virtue of humility. St. Dominic most humble, pray for me. St. Catherine most humble,

pray for me. St. Rose of the Heart of Jesus, pray for me. Before meals make an offering of the action to God ; take what is necessary for God's sake, but beware of being deceived by sensuality gliding in under the pretext of necessity ; desire to take no pleasure in what you are obliged to take. Recollecting it is an animal action, and that our thoughts and affections should be entirely for God, therefore if thoughts of food should come into your mind at other times, be careful to banish them instantly, turning the mind to some good thoughts. Always deny yourself some little thing, and always take what is most common or least to your taste, and eat slowly ; never speak of eating.

“ Always be in choir in time to make an entire offering of yourself, together with all your thoughts, words, actions, and sufferings of the day ; having thus given all to God, He is in some manner bound, and He will take care to preserve His own. If you commit a fault, do not brood over it, but immediately lift up your face and heart to God and make a sincere act of contrition, then think no more about it until your next examination for confession. Whenever you feel any swelling of pride or any other passion, immediately you are conscious of it lift up your heart to God, and keep the superior part of the soul above the swelling, that it may not affect it. When the swelling has been repressed, and you feel your soul tranquil, then quietly call it up again and again, that you may see what a poor miserable thing it is, and despise it.

“ Make an offering of the Office ; recite it carefully, and if you cannot do more, attend to the words, keeping yourself in the presence of God by occasional aspirations.

“ At meditation, place yourself in the presence of God by, as it were, a glance at the Tabernacle, and then at God in heaven. Listen attentively to what is read. If you cannot take anything from it, have some subject of your

own ; when the heart is warmed with the subject, then make acts of love and gratitude ; and always, in meditation on the Life and Passion, place before your eyes His humility and mortification. Always conclude the meditation by an act of thanksgiving, and a resolution of practising the virtue you most require ; choose also some aspiration. At your examination morning and night, make the virtue you are endeavouring to acquire the subject of your particular examination. If at meditation you find it impossible to fix your imagination or use your reason, then take some ejaculation, and repeat it over and over again. As soon as you find you are distracted, quietly bring your imagination back ; you have committed no sin as long as you were unconscious.

“Suffering patiently endured and offered to God is turned into sacrifice. If your patience is tried, immediately offer the trial to God, be it small or great ; don’t let the imagination get hold of it, and so paint yourself as a martyr. Rather see how small and poor a thing it is you have to offer to so great a God. Think how much others have to suffer from you. Humiliation and suffering are especial gifts of God. Humiliations purify, sufferings brighten, the soul. Now is the seed-time, in heaven will be the harvest ; those who sow in tears shall reap in joy. Now is the time for patient endurance of suffering, of trial, of combat ; but great will be the reward. Those who have followed our Lord nearest on earth will be closest to Him in heaven.

“Crosses are a proof of God’s love for us. They purify us, increase our merit, make us like our Lord ; and if we suffer with Christ, we shall also be glorified with Him. Our greatest cross should be to be without a cross. Look not at the rod, but at the hand that holds it.

“To get rid of scruples, prayer and blind obedience are the only two remedies. Scruples are temptations, and as

such ought to be banished, not dwelt upon. When some director or superior tells you it is a scruple, believe them ; for they see, and you do not. The Church allows scrupulous persons three privileges. First, if they are told that this or that is not a sin, and they act upon the advice, they are then no longer responsible. Secondly, unless they can swear that they knew beforehand that that which they were going to do was a mortal sin, and deliberately did it, they have not committed it. Thirdly, they may go to confession with very little examination, or even without any.

“In building up the spiritual house of our souls we must first dig deep the foundations of humility, *i.e.*, dig deep into the knowledge of ourselves, and dig self out. In this foundation must be laid the foundation-stone of faith. Then lay the broad basis of obedience.



“Have great confidence in our good God. How He loves us, and with what tender goodness He watches over us ! Not only does He permit that which happens to us, but His Spirit comes and makes use of it for our sanctification. Keep the eye of your soul fixed on Him ; ‘even as the eye of a handmaid is fixed upon her mistress,’ that she may catch the least sign of her will, so do you even look to God, that you may know and do His Will ; constantly dwelling upon Him, and being content to progress little by little ; going with the grace of God, not wishing to go before it. And think again of the goodness of Almighty God, and the wisdom with which He guides us. Submit all to Him, with great love of your own abjection ; seeking Him alone, not your own satisfaction ; loving and clinging to Him in dryness and desolation ; making acts of love and confidence. This can only be by a constant mortification of the mind, refusing it all those little satisfactions

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it would otherwise naturally seek in times of dryness. God, in His tender goodness, often allows the soul to suffer from aridity, in order to wean her from the satisfactions she finds in His service, and that so He may lead her to a higher degree of virtue; that she may love Him for Himself alone.

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“ Love God for Himself; not because you feel sweetness in loving, not because you are wretched if you do not love Him, not because it is the duty of your state to love Him, but love God for Himself alone, purely, disinterestedly, and be assured that acts of love made in a state of dryness are far more precious than those made in time of consolation. If you love God only in time of sweetness, then, when this sweetness is taken away, the soul is cast down in adversity; but if you love God purely for Himself, then you will love Him equally and even more in dryness, because more purely than in consolation. Divine love is increased in the soul in time of trial.

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“ Have great respect and charity for each Sister. Respect her, for she is made in the image of God. She has the grace of Christ, she is the spouse of Christ, and she is an inheritor of the kingdom of heaven; and your Spouse looks down with love on you when He sees you loving and respecting one another. Be ever mindful of religious courtesy; never let rudeness, far less vulgarity, be seen amongst you in words or actions. There is more in this than at first appears. Be as clay in the hand of your Superioress. Whatever office is given to you, be sure that it is best for you. You did not come here to do the work, but to sanctify yourself, and that office is given to you which tends most to that end. So do not say, I have not talent enough for this, or too much for that; for if you do say or think

so, it is because you want humility. When an office is given to you, do your best to fulfil the duties of it, however repugnant to nature ; but do all for the glory of God. The lower that office is, the better be you pleased, because you can lay up greater treasure in heaven. A menial act done purely for the glory of God, unseen by any human eye, will bring down a grace on the very spot where it is performed. If you take more pains with what you know you can do well, and are indifferent as to how you do other things, then you work for yourself or human praise, not for God. If you took more interest in the office from which you have been removed than in the one in which you now find yourself, you are not working for God. Sometimes meditate on the workshop of Nazareth.

“Prayer is lifting up the heart to God. We can pray either by petition as a creature begging from its Creator, making acts of praise and adoration, or we can offer ourselves to receive God’s light into our souls. Meditation is very simple. Place yourself in the presence of God, begging for His light. Then let the imagination paint the subject ; then bring your reason to bear upon it. In all prayer the heart must be lifted to God, or else it is not prayer. Humiliation and suffering are the two special gifts of God. Humiliation purifies, suffering burnishes. If you feel hurt by unkindness, be sure there is self-love in the soul, and thank God for His light. Never look at second causes. God disposes all things : it is He who has sent you the suffering ; accept it from Him. If you feel dry, or heavy, or all wrong, don’t suppose you are lost, and so give up all ; quietly keep yourself within your own interior. Tell God you still desire to love Him. So receive all from Him ; give all to Him.

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 “ ‘Nature runs faster than grace.’

“A word that represents a thought, a thought that is the

image of the soul, a soul that reflects God—such a *word* is strong and beautiful.”

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The following are her own reflections and aspirations :—

“Am I fit to die? Have I any attachment to things in the world? Do I love anything out of God? Have I any irregular affection to any one in the Convent? Do I love any of my Sisters, and not for God? Have I any habit that is not pleasing to God? When I lay down at night, let me always dispose myself as if for death, stretched upon my bier, and clasping the image of Him who was crucified for me.

“Thou hast made us for Thyself, Great God; and our hearts can never rest until they rest in Thee. Oh, how noble is the end for which we were created! All things are made for us, but we are made for God. Beware of endeavouring to find your *rest* in yourself instead of God. Escape from self, and cast all on God. Consider the eternity of the life of joy or sorrow to which we are hastening—eternal joy of the Blessed, torment of the Reprobate. Be very faithful to inspirations. In proportion as we are faithful to the dictate of conscience, in proportion will our souls grow and increase.

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“Oh, my God! I give and consecrate my whole being to Thee. To Thee I give my eyes, that they may look to Thee alone; my ears, that they may listen to Thee; my tongue, that it may praise Thee; my hands, that they may work for Thee; my feet, that they may walk after Thee; my understanding, that it may know Thee; my memory, that it may be recollected in Thee; my will, that it may serve Thee. All that I am and have I most freely give to

Thee. Amen, Amen. Oh, most holy Mother of God, make an entire offering of me to God, that I may serve Him in contempt and sorrow, as well as in joy and consolation."

The following seem to be Notes from the Retreat:—

"As long as the Angels made God their firmament they stood firm; as soon as they endeavoured to rest upon themselves they fell. They turned from God to themselves, this was their apostasy, this their rebellion. We are creatures of sense rather than of reason. The soul has three senses: the one by which it touches the animal nature, the second by which it touches itself, the third by which it touches God.

"Humble yourself to every human creature for God's sake; but that which is of God in you must not bow to the human part in your neighbour, but rather submit your human heart to what is of grace in your neighbour. You will never lose the merit of your good works as long as you give the merit of them to God, not to yourself. When God shall arise to judgment, what shall I say? and when He shall ask, what shall I answer? For every idle word that man shall speak he must give an account of it.

"Humility is the perfect submission of the heart and mind to God. We cannot be united to God unless we are subject to God. Humility makes us vile in our own eyes; it makes us wish to be despised by others. Humility is the soul of obedience, and obedience is the body of Humility. *He* humbled Himself, being made obedient unto death. Perfect obedience must be prompt, simple, joyful. Obedience is the test of Humility. The fall of St. Peter was caused by four things: self-confidence, contempt of others, tepidity—'he followed afar off'—and human respect. His repentance was prompt, generous, loving, and continuous. Christ is humility; a humble heart is the heart of Christ.

“God’s Will is an emanation of His wisdom, an expression of His love. Nothing happens to us but by His Will. Every command, every rule, every voice of our conscience, every inspiration, is an expression of His Will to us. Christ came not to do His own will, but the Will of Him that sent Him. ‘My food is to do the Will of Him who sent me ; oh, teach me to do Thy Will, for Thou art my God.’

“‘God is the most humble of beings.’ He ever serves us, and we make Him serve in our sins when we use His gifts to offend Him. ‘Oh, wonderful humility of God ! There must be some attribute in God very like humility, although we know it not. Christ has made Himself a stepping-stool for us, that by stepping on His Humanity we may reach His Divinity. He humbles Himself to us to lift us to Him. Think of the peace and recollection there was in all our dear Lord’s actions, in His daily work, in His preaching, in His suffering ; all is calm, peace, recollection —‘ My peace I leave unto you.’

“The perfecting of the work of God depends upon you. You, by being imperfect, spoil the whole. First, observe your rule, strictly, spiritually, internally, and externally. The spirit of a Dominican Sister of Penance and a Spouse of Christ should be one of gravity and recollection, internal and external. Constant interior prayer is the greatest help to recollection ; but if at any time the interior should be dissipated, then keep a stricter guard on the exterior, to prevent the interior from breaking out. Hurry or precipitation is much against recollection ; if the body runs, the soul runs also, and becomes unrecollected. Manner is a great sign of the interior. If the head is tossed, the soul also is tossed about. If the eyes are staring out, the soul is staring out too.

“If you are told you have some fault, you have that fault. Do not stop to consider, Have I or have I not this fault ? You are not in a position to see yourself. You have that fault ; now strive to amend it.”

This Retreat was given by Dr. Ullathorne immediately after the Third Provincial Synod of Westminster, in July 1859. It was the first sketch of his great work, "The Groundwork of the Christian Virtues." The editor of his letters says, that many pages in that work are taken *verbatim* from the meditations there given, and adds, "None who listened to them will ever forget them; as one of the hearers said, 'They made you in love with God.'"¹

The most startling sentence in the portions noted above is a quotation from Lacordaire, who says:—

"L'orgueil n'est que la forme de l'égoïsme, la passion du neant qui se ramasse en soi et qui veut opprimer tout le reste; humilité est la forme de l'amour, la passion de l'être vraiment grand, qui veut se faire petit pour se mieux donner. Aussi *Dieu est-il le plus humble des êtres*; lui qui est sans égal, a des égaux dans la triplicité de la personnalité divine; lui qui est la hauteur sans mesure, s'est abaissé vers le neant, pour créer l'être; vers l'Homme, pour prendre sa nature."²

Dr. Ullathorne quotes it thus:—

"A great preacher of our time arose amidst a vast audience of intellectual men in Paris, and thrilled them through with this astounding proposition, 'God is the humblest of all beings.' This language is not new in the Church. St. Augustine says, 'We are always aiming at great things, but to be truly great we must take hold of little things. Deign to be humble for your own sake at

¹ "Letters," p. 101.

² *Conférences de Notre Dame*, xxi.

least, even as God, who was never humble for His own sake, condescends to be humble for your sake.”¹

He goes on afterwards to develop the idea of divine humility in the relations between the three Persons of the Blessed Trinity, hinted at by Lacordaire. It seemed needful to say thus much, as the sentence isolated from its context is crude, and apparently in direct opposition to the teaching of St. Thomas, who says:—

“God alone is perfect, and to Him humility is not applicable according to His Divine nature, but only according to the nature He assumed.” (*Solus Deus est perfectus, cui secundum naturam divinam non competit humilitas, sed solum secundum naturam assumptam.*) Summa, 2. 2 dæ. q. clxi., art. 1, ad 4.

These difficulties were not likely to occur to a young Religious who was drinking in eagerly words that brought strength and courage to her soul, laid bare its faults and imperfections, and taught her how she could overcome the faults, and make progress in virtue and the love of God.

¹ Serm. 117 *de verb. Evan. Joan.*, quoted in “Groundwork,” p. 161.

CHAPTER III

1860-1866

STOKE UPON-TRENT—STONE—CLIFTON— DANGEROUS OPERATION

IN September 1860, Sister Rose Columba was sent to preside as Vicaress over the little Community at Stoke-upon-Trent, a town about six miles from Stone, and inhabited almost entirely by people connected with the potteries of Messrs. Minton, Copeland, and other names well known in the foremost rank of English china manufacture.

The Church of "Our Lady of the Angels" had been begun in 1856, and the Presbytery had been built before the removal of the Very Rev. Dr. Northcote to the Headship of Oscott College. The schools were built in 1858, and the small portion of the Convent then built was taken possession of by a little band of Sisters in 1857. In the Life of Mother Margaret we read:—

"Many were the hardships which for years fell to their lot. They slept in a common dormitory, and their Community-room served by day the purpose of a middle school. For a choir, indeed, they were well provided in a gallery constructed for the purpose; but their temporary refectory

and kitchen had to be approached through a wooden communication which was not impervious to wet. Stoke was for nine years the post of honour of the Congregation ; it presented the Religious with plenty of work and little or no comfort ; but the work has been so blessed, the people have shown themselves so responsive to every call, and so sensible of every sacrifice made on their behalf, that those who have laboured there have ever given it a warm place in their affections.”¹

When a Community has not reached the number of twelve, the Superior is called the Vicaress. If, however, a Convent has once been constituted into a Priory, the Superior continues to be the Prioress, even though the numbers should become less than twelve. The Vicaress is nominated by the Prioress Provincial, and removable at will. In a Priory the Vicaress ranks next to the Sub-Prioress, and only takes charge of the government of the Community when both the Prioress and Sub-Prioress are absent. As Stoke was not yet a Priory, the Vicaress was the Superior.

It will be readily perceived that such a post as this would be exactly such as would suit the ardent temperament of Sister Rose Columba. In after years she would often hold up the example of the warm-hearted Catholics of Stoke before the more languid people of Devonshire. The robust character of their faith, their generous response to any call upon their charity, the keen appreciation which many of them had of beauty in Art, found an echo in her, and it

¹ “ Life,” pp. 281, 282.

used to be said that she had left her heart in Stoke. Mother Provincial says, "She was then in the very prime of her health and powers." One of her companions there writes :—

"I was some time with her when she was Vicaress at Stoke, and my recollections of her are very pleasant ones. She gave us an example of regularity and self-sacrifice. Very little of the Convent was then built ; and though, being Vicaress of the House, she had a cell, yet it also served as her room for business, and place for seeing the Sisters. Her whole heart was in the welfare of the small Community ; and at the same time she took a great interest in the Congregation, was indefatigable in visiting the sick, giving instructions, and often at times most inconvenient to herself. But she made it a rule never to be absent from recreation, and expected all to be cheerful and happy at those times. She felt that the Chapter was one of the best means of keeping up a religious spirit, and always prepared a little exhortation for those days. Some of these little discourses are still fresh in my memory, especially some explanations of verses of the Psalms, which often recur to my mind now as we recite the Office."

It seems that when first Sister Rose Columba had to hold her Chapter, she had considerable difficulty in speaking to her Sisters ; but steady perseverance enabled her to master this difficulty, and words came to her lips, and touched the hearts of her hearers in a remarkable way.

Another Sister writes :—

"When I was with her at Stoke in early days, 1863, she was Vicaress there then, and in her full youth and power ;

I thought her simply perfect. She used to get into trouble then for doing too much in the way of austerity. In fact, I think she did too much for a Superior ; it made it a little awkward for her Community. They used to say that, if there was a bad potato in the dish, she was sure to take it, and it made it difficult for her less perfect Sisters who wanted to take a good one. One Lent she would take nothing but treacle off the Collation-tray ; and some of the other Sisters thought themselves bound to follow her example, and to live on bread and treacle too, and made themselves quite ill in consequence.

"I suppose it was holiness that gave such power to her least word ; for she certainly was not, at any rate in those days, eloquent. She seldom spoke at Chapter, and when she did, it was only a few words. But those few words seemed to stick, and go straight to the point.

"I remember, at Stoke, we were going to have a large Confirmation, and being a very small Community, were rather overpowered with work. Speaking about the arrangements beforehand, she said, 'I daresay a good many of you will be very tired ; but never mind, you must remember our Lord has been tired too.' It was a very simple thing to say, but I don't think I ever forgot it. It was the first thing that put clearly before me the idea of *labour* for our Lord ; for I was rather a pious convert in those days, and had much more idea of *enjoying* than of suffering fatigue for God."

There is some discrepancy between this account and that of the Sister quoted above concerning her discourses in Chapter. We may perhaps reconcile them by supposing that the set discourses were rather formidable efforts and seldom attempted ; while she made a point of saying a few simple words every time, though even these were accomplished with difficulty.

Speaking to the poor and sick appears to have come much more easily to her.

Another Sister writes :—

“I remember, when she first went to Stoke, the Sisters there said she was like a living Rule ; that it was an instruction to go out with her to the sick ; she never spoke one word, or raised her eyes in the streets ; and her instructions to the poor and sick were so beautiful.”

Such devotedness could not be without its effect upon the Catholics of Stoke, and though they had, before she went there, obtained an excellent reputation for their practical piety, yet that piety received an extra stimulus during the three years that Sister Rose Columba laboured among them. She was remembered with affection for many years after she left Staffordshire, and received many pressing invitations from the people to return. One of Mother Margaret's sayings about Stoke would seem to belong to this period.

“She never visited her Convent at Stoke without expressing her delight at the hearty way in which the congregation there joined in the public singing. One Sunday, when there had been Exposition of the Most Holy Sacrament, she came from the choir after service was over, quite overpowered. ‘Oh, my dear child,’ she said to the Superioress, in her own simple phraseology, ‘it more than repays me for all that has been done in this place to hear these people singing the praises of God, *and to see those big men go down on their two knees!*’”¹

¹ “Life,” p. 301.

Mother Margaret had been known to say of her, "There is a soul that does everything from *love*." But the more she valued her, the more did she seek to preserve her from the danger of pride and self-satisfaction. A Sister relates that—

"A little party of the Sisters came over from Stoke with her for a Retreat. One after another went to our Mother and spoke of Sister Rose Columba as a Saint. Our Mother did not like this, especially as they were going in for rather extra mortifications and fastings, and some were breaking down. I remember she severely humbled Sister Rose Columba about it; and Sister E. P., who was then second at Stoke, and returned with her, told me how much she had felt for her, and how very beautifully she had taken it."

Not even the vigilant care of Mother Margaret could prevent the fervent young Superior from overtaxing her strength. After three years of zealous labour, she went to Stone in January 1864. She was proceeding to give an account of her Community and their doings at Stoke, when Mother Margaret looked earnestly at her, and cut short her explanations by saying, "You go to the Infirmary at once, and don't come out again until I give you leave." It was the beginning of a long illness, and her place at Stoke was filled by another. In the summer she had sufficiently recovered to be ready for work again, and on August 25 she was appointed Sub-Prioress at Clifton, where she remained for more than two years. She there threw herself heart and soul into all that was going on, working incessantly among the poor of Bristol in

such a way as to make the Prioress there say, "She is simply killing herself."

The Catholic poor at Stoke were mostly Staffordshire people, while at Bristol they were chiefly Irish, and Sister Rose Columba thoroughly appreciated the humorous character of some of the incidents of her intercourse with them. On one occasion she had been reasoning with a woman who was always complaining of her husband. She tried to convince her that she was bound to reverence her husband, and, among other arguments she used, said that the man was the first in the order of Creation. "Yes, Sister," said this assertor of woman's rights, "I know that Almighty God made Adam first; but, when He came to look at him, He saw he was such a poor sort of a creature that He was obliged to make a woman to help him."

An example of the thorough way in which she devoted herself to the service of the poor is the following. An old woman, paralysed and bed-ridden, had shown a desire to become a Catholic. The Sisters used to go and instruct her, until she was ready to be received into the Church. After her reception and first Communion, they were very regular in their visits. The old lady was not very tidy in her habits. Once when Sister Rose Columba went to see her, she found her restless and uncomfortable, and asked her what she could do for her. "Sister, dear," she said, "I am so lousy I can't rest." Whereupon Sister Rose Columba set to work, and carefully

cleaned both her and her bed. It was not a very agreeable occupation ; but she never shrank from any work of this kind among the poor, whom she regarded as the living representatives of Christ.

One who was with her at Clifton says :—

“I used to go with her sometimes to visit the people at the workhouse—a very long walk. One day, when visiting one of our own people there, a poor woman in an opposite bed, who was dying, asked to speak to us. She was Irish, but had been brought up by Protestants, and had been out in Protestant service from the age of seven. Later on she had married, as she expressed it, ‘a black Protestant,’ and had never made her first Communion or first Confession—in fact she knew nothing except that she wanted to die a Catholic. It was rather a difficult case, as she had been entered as a Protestant. However, Sister Rose Columba did what she could to instruct her, and no doubt prayed. On our way home we called and told the priest who had charge of the workhouse about it. At first he was rather unwilling to interfere, but the poor woman’s maiden name was so clearly Irish that he consented to try and see what could be done ; and it ended in the poor thing receiving all the last Sacraments, and dying a good and happy death.”

On the 1st of October 1866, Sister Rose Columba was appointed Vicaress at St. Mary Church ; but the following occurrence took place at Clifton, and may therefore fittingly be related in this chapter. She had been suffering for a considerable time from the growth of a tumour in the lower part of her jaw, close to the throat ; and in the spring of 1867 it was thought necessary that an operation should be

performed, and she came back to the Convent at Clifton for the purpose. Mother Margaret and Mother Imelda met her there from Stone. Readers of Mother Margaret's Life will not need to be reminded of the horror with which she regarded surgical operations.

"On two occasions, when a surgical operation was necessary, her feeling for the sufferers amounted to anguish. The last of these caused her such intense distress as to shake her whole frame. She was unable to stay in the room by the patient, though she reproached herself for this as for a weakness, but remained all the time in the choir, kneeling, with her face buried in her hands, her sighs and sobs being distinctly audible."¹

This operation was not skilfully performed ; an artery was cut, and the patient bled violently. Even after it was thought to have been staunched, Sister Rose Columba said that she woke up and found herself in a pool of blood. Monsignor Clarke has kindly supplied some further particulars. He says :—

"Soon after the operation, about 7 P.M., Mother Margaret sent over for me to come at once. I went immediately to the Convent, and found M. Rose Columba bleeding profusely and alarmingly from the wound. The doctor had left some time previously. Of course I urged sending for him at once ; but Mother Margaret said, 'I want you to put your hand on her face, and I believe your priest's hand will do more good than any doctor.' I was very much struck by this holy woman's great faith. I laid my hand on M. Rose Columba's cheek and made the sign of the

¹ "Life," p. 382.

Cross with my thumb as close to the wound as possible. Mother Margaret and myself went into a small adjoining room, and I had spoken but a few words of encouragement and sympathy to her when a Sister came to say the bleeding had ceased. We returned to the room where the patient was, and found it was so. I have always looked upon it as a wonderful reward to Mother Margaret's faith."

Mother Imelda was with her during the operation, and never left her for four-and-twenty hours. Sister Rose Columba wrote soon afterwards, and said, "All through the night she remained by me: I never opened my eyes but I met hers watching me." She had a wonderful power of recuperation, and a Sister who was there says, "I remember Canon Clarke asking me in the school how she was, and when I said I supposed she must be better, as I had just met her going to choir, he looked quite angry, and said, 'She ought not to be allowed.'" The operation took place on the 13th of May, Mother Margaret was able to leave her for St. Mary Church on the 17th, and she herself was able to reach St. Mary Church on the 22nd. Mother Margaret said, "She had never realised before what our Blessed Lady must have endured at the foot of the Cross during those three hours." The Sister above quoted says, "She came back to heavy work at St. Mary Church, as almost immediately on her return Sister Anne Monica got rheumatic fever, and Mother Rose Columba took almost all the nursing."

CHAPTER IV

ST. MARY CHURCH

Foundation of the Convent and Mission in 1864—Mother R. Columba Superior, 1866—Orphanage—F. Procter; his death—Mr. Chatto builds the Church—Death of Mother Margaret—Church opened, 1869—Convent commenced, 1870; completed, 1876—Dr. Ullathorne's visits—Completion of Tower, 1881—Silver Jubilee of M. R. Columba, 1881—Death of Mother Imelda Poole—Death of Mr. Chatto, 1882—Completion of Guest-House—Proposals for Adelaide Foundation.

ON October 1, 1866, Sister Rose Columba was sent to be Vicaress at St. Mary Church, which had not yet been constituted a Priory.

The Right Rev. Dr. Vaughan, Bishop of Plymouth, had known Mother Margaret and her nuns in Clifton, and in the spring of 1864 he had invited them to make a foundation in some part of his diocese. It was thought that St. Mary Church would be a suitable place, as he wished them to open an Orphanage for Girls. A house, then called Southampton Villa, was in the market, with a considerable plot of ground; but while the nuns were deliberating whether they could obtain the piece, the greater part of the land was purchased by Mr. Cary of Tor Abbey; so that the nuns had to content themselves with the villa and its garden,

with a field which they at first rented, and afterwards bought from Mr. Cary, who let them have it on very favourable terms.

St. Mary Church owes its name to a very ancient Church dedicated to Our Lady long before the Norman Conquest. In the vellum sheets at the beginning of a Latin copy of the Gospels, now in the Bodleian Library, it is written in Anglo-Saxon :—

“ Here it is witnessed in this Christ’s Book, what Leofric the Bishop conferred on St. Peter’s Minster at Exanceaster, where his Episcopal See is. Namely, that he recovered what had heretofore been alienated, that is, the land at Brancecumbe and at Sealtcumbe, and the land at Sancte Maria circean.”¹

In Domesday Book two manors are mentioned, one of which belonged to Bishop Osbern, the successor of Leofric, and it is called “*Æcclesia Sanctæ Mariæ*,” and is said to be “part of the sustenance of the Canons.” The other—larger manor—is called “Saint Marie Cherche;” the name is not turned into Latin. This manor passed through the families of Robert de St. Mary Church, of Lord Audley, Lord Fitzwarren, John Erle of Bath, and then by sale to John Forde of Bagtor, who sold it to Sir George Cary of Cockington, the ancestor of Mr. Cary of Tor Abbey. Several remarkable traces of the divisions of the plots of land,

¹ The MS. is in Saxon, *Bibl. Bodl. Auct.*, D. 2. 16. See two papers in the “Transactions of the Devonshire Association,” 1886, pp. 149–160, 429–441.

still called "Geestlands" and "Land Scores," may still be seen, marking the strips that were once held in the days of serfdom. Many of these strips are marked in an old map of the Cary Manor as belonging, in 1775, to Jacob Bartlett, a descendant of whom now lives at Ilsham Manor. Mother Frances Raphael Drane says:—

"I knew old Mr. William Bartlett of Ilsham. He remembered St. Mary Church before any of the turnpike roads were made; when the only road to Newton was over Milber Down, and to Torre by a road which used to wind down from behind Mr. Mills' house. The road over Furzewell Hill was only being cut in 1837. Mr. Bartlett used to describe the country life of his boyish days as very primitive; all goods were carried on the backs of pack-horses, the roads not admitting of waggons. No such things as Banks were in use; his father used to keep his money in a chest in a loft, approached only by a ladder, which was removable. Mr. Coleridge used to say that a church at St. Mary Church was burned by the Danes. In the churchyard, when I first remember it, was the foundation of the churchyard cross, overgrown, and forming quite a considerable elevation. It was levelled, I think, before the time when the churchyard was enlarged. The present vicarage is, of course, quite recent. The old vicarage is still standing in the old road, a pretty picturesque house—as in my early days all the cottages down that road were—thatched and covered with roses."

The old Parish Church has now entirely disappeared. When Mother Margaret first visited the place, the little old Church was gone, but the ancient tower was still standing, not at all in keeping with the large and

handsome new nave and chancel which had been built in front of it. Mother Margaret went to see this Church, and came away saying, "It is very handsome, but I will build Our Lady a better Church than that." She had no idea then how it was to be accomplished. When she reached St. Mary Church with six Sisters in August 1864, she found the house had been prepared for their reception by the care and forethought of Mrs. Bonar of the Cliff, Babbacombe. Bishop Vaughan was there to receive them, and himself personally assisted them in getting settled in their new habitation. His lordship put up their pictures for them, and helped them to arrange the drawing-room which served as the chapel, where he said the first Mass the next morning. Mrs. Bonar had prayed most earnestly for the foundation of a Convent at St. Mary Church; and when the Community was really there, she did not long survive the fulfilment of her hopes, for on February 10, 1865, she died a very holy and happy death at Edinburgh, nursed by one of the Sisters from Stone.

The first chaplain to the little Community was the Rev. Denis Byrne, who lodged in the village; and on August 27, the very day of his arrival, two poor children from Torquay were received by the Sisters, and formed the commencement of the Orphanage. In the following April the Rev. Patrick O'Brien replaced Father Byrne, and on May 31 the Rev. Hyacinth Arden, O.P., came and supplied for nearly six months. Other priests, some Dominicans, some seculars, served

the Mission and Community, until on September 14, 1866, the Very Rev. Father Augustine Procter, O.P., ex-Provincial of the Order, who had just celebrated his golden Jubilee of religious life, took up his abode in a room in the villa. In spite of his advanced age, he laboured zealously among the few Catholics that were to be found in the neighbourhood, collected the children into the School, which the Sisters had opened in the newly erected Orphanage, and his sermons on Sunday were attended by several Protestants as well as Catholics. On Rosary Sunday he erected, with the Bishop's sanction, the Confraternity of the Holy Rosary, and inscribed the first names on the roll of the Confraternity. The first name is that of Sister M. Rose Columba Adams, who had arrived a day or two before.

It was a great consolation to Mother Margaret to know that her children at St. Mary Church, so far away from the Mother House, were under the fatherly care and protection of this holy and experienced priest, and they hoped that his life would have been preserved to them for some years. Father Procter, as Provincial, had been extremely kind to Mother Margaret on several occasions, when his assistance was most valuable to the Congregation; and she rejoiced that her daughters should be able to provide for his comfort in his declining years.

The four months that his work at St. Mary Church lasted were not without their trials. The very week after the Confraternity of the Rosary had been estab-

lished, Torquay was visited by the notorious anti-Catholic agitator Murphy, who lost no opportunity of scattering the most foul calumnies against the Sisters. At that time two of the nuns used to go down to teach the School attached to the Church of the Assumption, Abbey Road, Torquay. Unless the weather was bad, they were accustomed to walk, and they had to encounter every kind of abusive language, and sometimes even showers of stones from the boys and men that they passed on the road. One of the first converts at St. Mary Church was a man who, Protestant as he was, could not bear to see the Sisters maltreated, and defended them from some unruly lads. Murphy had taught the boys some low no-Popery songs; and now and then they would come into the garden, and sing these vile songs before the windows of the Convent. At last one of the nuns, who was a distant relative of the old Bishop of Exeter, Dr. Philpotts, wrote to the Vicar of the parish, the Rev. Reginald Barnes, who was the Bishop's secretary, and asked him to restrain the boys in his School, which was next door to the Convent, from annoying them. He came and called on the nuns, and was most polite. Afterwards he went into his School and discovered the chief offenders, whom he then and there punished severely. This had a most salutary effect; for not only did it considerably abate the nuisance, but one of the very boys who was punished became a constant attendant at the Chapel, begged to be instructed, and was the means of his whole family coming into the Church. When this

anti-Catholic feeling was at its height, one of those who were there at the time says:—

“Some of us were considerably disturbed and feared that our influence with the people was destroyed for ever ; but Sister Rose Columba never faltered for a moment. She told her Sisters : ‘Father Procter says we ought to rejoice that we are counted worthy to suffer persecution, and I do rejoice. But,’ she added, ‘I have not come to St. Mary Church for nothing—certainly.’”

It was many months before the agitation died away, and Father Procter, as well as the Sisters, had to bear the brunt of its first violence.

On the 8th of January 1867, Father Procter, though feeling unwell, said Mass in order not to disappoint the nuns, and then found himself unable to say his Office for the first time in his life. The medical man did not see any cause for alarm, but two of the nuns remained in attendance on him. About eight or nine in the evening they saw a sudden change come over his face, and in a moment he was gone. Telegrams were sent to Woodchester, and also to Stone ; and Mother Margaret set out at once to the aid of her distressed children. The Religious watched day and night by the dead, reciting the Psalter until the arrival of the Fathers, who, after a Requiem sung in the little Chapel, bore away the body of the venerable Father to its last resting-place at Woodchester. Mother Margaret wrote :—

“The dear remains have just gone, and we are left here desolate enough as regards ourselves, but for him it must

be bliss indeed. He looked like a saint, quite unchanged since his death, but only looking more calm each day. It was truly a hard cross for our Sisters and for me, for we know not what to do, and we shall not easily find his like again."

The blow must have fallen with special weight upon Sister Rose Columba, but she never lost her presence of mind; and Mother Margaret, on her return to Stone, "praised the wonderful self-possession with which she was able, in a time of such emergency and excitement, to take exactly the right and best course, with perfect deference and obedience to Superiors, even in the wording of the telegram."

For some time after Father Procter's death the Community were without a regular chaplain. A French priest said Mass during the week, and Cañon Morris of Westminster, who was staying in the neighbourhood for a few weeks, used to hear confessions on Saturday and do the Sunday duties. The Sisters say of him in their Annals:—

"He interested himself very much in the Community and the Mission, and was indefatigable in getting the people to Confession. He had just broken with all his old ties (as secretary to the Archbishop), in preparation for entering the Jesuit Novitiate, and his whole soul was full of the beauty and perfection of the Religious Life. We shall always remember with the greatest gratitude the generous kindness with which he worked for us during the time of our orphanhood. He left on the 25th of February, and entered the Novitiate at Roehampton on the 1st of March 1867."

Father John Morris, S.J., whose death in the very act of preaching on October 22, 1893, has caused universal regret, never forgot Sister Rose Columba, and she had many proofs of his kind remembrance of her even to the last. Several Dominican Fathers came in succession, but none came to stay for more than a month. The Bishop, the Right Rev. Dr. Vaughan, blessed the newly built Orphanage, attended by Fathers Dent and Reginald Buckler, O.P., on May 23. Sister Rose Columba had returned from Clifton, after the perilous operation already described, the day before, with Mother Imelda, so that both of them, with Mother Margaret, were present at the blessing of the Orphanage.

This was Mother Margaret's last visit to St. Mary Church, and her last meeting with Sister Rose Columba. A great joy was granted them both on the 24th, the Feast of "Our Lady Help of Christians." Mr. William J. Potts Chatto of the Daison had lately come to reside there. He had had a great devotion to St. Denis, and had made a vow to build a Church in his honour. He had several times inquired about the plans for the Convent Chapel, but on this day he made the nuns a distinct proposal to build his votive Church on their grounds. Mother Margaret left for Stone three days afterwards; but on the 1st of June Mr. Chatto came to see Sister Rose Columba, accompanied by the Bishop, and Mr. Joseph Hansom, the architect. Needless to say that she entered into the idea with all her heart; and the work was commenced that very day by the Bishop driving a stake into the ground where the High

Altar was to stand, and Mr. Chatto himself began to demolish one of the little cottages that then occupied the space now occupied by the Laundry. The following Monday the place was full of workmen. After marking the site of the Altar, the Bishop led the way to the Chapel, where he said the *Te Deum* with the founder and the Community. The building of the Church and its decoration was, for several years to come, an object of the greatest interest to Sister Rose Columba. Every detail of the plans and of their execution was discussed with her by Mr. and Mrs. Chatto, who esteemed her as one of their most true and valued friends. Though intensely grateful to this generous founder, who seemed only desirous to raise a Church that should be, as far as possible, worthy of being the House of God, yet the building of the Church entailed no small amount of self-sacrifice on the part of the Community. The plans included the demolition of the whole of the Villa, which hitherto had served for Chapel, Convent, and Presbytery. This, of course, obliged them to build a new Convent, and on a much grander scale than would have been thought of if it had not been connected with so beautiful a Church. The keeping up of so large a Church was no small expense and labour. As long as Mr. Chatto lived he never allowed the nuns to be at any cost on account of the Church, and he fully intended to have made a provision for defraying future repairs that would in course of time become necessary. But the legal papers for this end, though prepared, were never executed, on account of the near approach

of death. Besides these more obvious burthens which the new Church laid upon the Sisters, they had to put up with a variety of minor inconveniences during the progress of the building. Part of the Villa had to be pulled down at once; the roof was broken in several places and let in the wet, and the attics which formed the dormitory were often flooded. The Orphanage had an unfinished gable which the frequent south-west storms drenched with rain; and the only communication between the Convent and the Orphanage was through a long passage of boards covered with felt, by no means impervious to the weather. In fact, the Sisters used to call it "mud lane."

These inconveniences, seemingly trivial, become serious when people are in weak health; and yet no one who conversed with the Sisters would have imagined that they were suffering at all, so bravely and brightly were all crosses accepted in a spirit of penance, and offered for the glory of God and the good of souls.

It was on the 10th of July 1867 that the present writer was sent by the Bishop to take charge of the Mission of St. Mary Church. I have always regarded it as one of the great blessings of my life to have been brought into such frequent contact with so richly gifted a soul as that of Sister Rose Columba. It has always been a wonder to me that she should have admitted me to her friendship; but she told me once that something I had said to her, soon after my arrival, had been of great service to her. What it was, she never mentioned; but, with that frank generosity that

was part of her nature, she repaid me a hundredfold, by the kind interest that she took ever afterwards in all that concerned me and mine. It is one of the graces that God gives to those whose hearts are wholly given to Him, to enable them to find a place in their hearts for a great variety of persons, and to show towards each such a delicate sympathy as if there were no one else to be thought of. Sister Rose Columba had strong sympathies, and also strong antipathies. She did not reason much, but arrived at conclusions by a sort of intuition. Like Mother Margaret, "she did not receive her ideas by the way of reasoning; she held them as an instinct."¹ She often blamed herself very severely for the antipathy she could not help feeling towards some people, almost at first sight. With others it was often at first sight that she gave her confidence, and formed a life-long friendship. It is not pretended that she was always right in these rapidly formed conclusions. There were many excellent persons whom she respected and valued, but with whom she never could feel at home; while she sometimes had to suffer much from those whom she had trusted too generously.

Before gathering up the recollections that remain of her work at St. Mary Church, in the Community, and in the Mission, it may be well to give an outline of the principal events of those sixteen years that she presided over St. Mary's Priory.

The year 1867 was marked by Garibaldi's invasion

¹ "Life," p. 204.

of the Papal States, and his defeat at Mentana by the Papal troops, aided by a French force sent to their assistance. Some sparks of the ancient chivalrous fire that produced the Crusades were enkindled by the critical condition in which Pope Pius IX. found himself placed, and young Catholics hastened from all countries to enrol themselves in the Papal Zouaves. Among others, young Mr. Joseph Hansom suddenly started for Rome. His father, the architect of our Church, went off in search of him, and the anxiety and excitement made it impossible for him to attend to the plans of the Church. Much delay was thus caused, and both Mr. Chatto and the nuns had many trials of patience.

In the middle of November the condition of Mother Margaret's health became so serious that the Community agreed to say the Fifteen Mysteries of the Rosary every day for her. She grew worse and worse all through Lent. Sister Rose Columba was herself too ill to travel, so that she was obliged to deny herself the consolation of seeing once more her beloved Mother, who lingered until May 11th, when she was released from her long protracted agony, and breathed forth her soul to God. The Community at St. Mary Church united in spirit with their Sisters at Stone, assisted at the Requiem, and said the Office for the Dead at the time when the funeral was going on.

The death of Mother Margaret was an irreparable loss to Sister Rose Columba. Her place as Prioress

Provincial could be and was most efficiently filled by the holy and highly gifted Mother Imelda Poole, but it was impossible that any one else could ever be to the subject of this Memoir what Mother Margaret had been. St. Paul tells the Corinthians: "If you have ten thousand instructors in Christ, yet not many fathers. For in Christ Jesus by the gospel I have begotten you."¹ Henceforth she must go on her way comparatively alone, though she would have added, "and yet not alone!" She had many dearly loved Sisters and Mothers in the Community, but none to whom she could confide fearlessly all her thoughts, anxieties, and hopes, with the certainty of never being misunderstood. But if she had lost her Mother, it made it all the more incumbent upon her to carry on that Mother's spirit, and be herself a mother to others. Opportunities for this soon multiplied around her.

The week before Mother Margaret died, a Protestant clergyman and his wife, with no sort of tendency themselves towards the Catholic religion, confided their little deaf and dumb girl to the care of the nuns. She was only three and a half years old, and remained at the Convent four years. The effect of her stay there will be best summed up when our narrative reaches 1872.

In spite of the delays that have been mentioned, the work of the Church continued to progress; and it was thought advisable to hasten on the building of the part intended for the Nun's Choir and Chapter Room,

¹ 1 Cor. iv. 15.

and to use these as a temporary Chapel, the room in the Villa being very inconveniently crowded. On the 24th of May 1868, the Feast of "Our Lady Help of Christians," this Chapel was blessed, and the Bishop preached at the opening. In June, Mother Imelda Poole paid her first visit to St. Mary Church as Prioress Provincial; and the Sisters say, "In one way it made us realise more vividly than ever the loss we had sustained, when we saw her come in the place of one who will never visit us again. But it was the greatest consolation to the whole Community to feel her spirit so completely represented by the one who filled her place, and to hear so much more about her than we could from any other source."

The corner-stone of the Church was solemnly laid on August the 5th, the Feast of "Our Lady *Ad Nives*." The Bishop blessed the stone, and Mr. Chatto spread the mortar, and the little hand of his only son, not quite two years old, was laid upon the stone, that he might be reckoned a co-founder of the Church. The Bishop gave a short address in the open air, and the ceremony was attended by all the priests of the neighbourhood, and many Catholics from Torquay. Amongst these was Mr. Cary of Tor Abbey, who showed great interest in the work, and afterwards sent a handsome donation to the Convent, which facilitated the purchase of a field that they wished to include in their garden.

On New Year's Day, 1869, an accident occurred which might have been serious. The Sisters had

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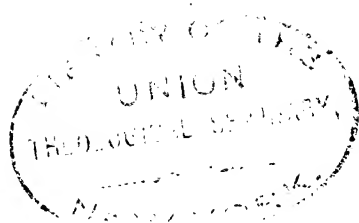
made a Crib in a recess in the temporary Chapel, and it was lined with straw. While the priest was saying the devotions at the Crib, he perceived that one of the candles had ignited the straw. He pulled away part of the straw, and it blazed up. There was some confusion, and the Bishop, who was present, went to the kitchen to fetch water, and called out, "For God's sake give me some water." The servant girl coolly replied, "Hot or cold, my lord?" His lordship possessed himself of a jug, which he carried to the Chapel. But happily the fire had been put out, and no damage was done.

In April, the Rev. W. F. Downing was appointed to act as chaplain to Mr. Chatto, and the two priests took possession of the new Presbytery, which was now completed entirely at Mr. Chatto's expense. The Church, or rather the portion of it that was in the plans and contract, was rapidly approaching completion, and at length it was possible to fix the day for the opening.

Thursday, August 19, was a great day for the Catholics of St. Mary Church. Extraordinary exertions had been made to get the sanctuary ready at the beginning of the week, and the Bishop was able, on Tuesday the 17th, to consecrate the beautiful High Altar, dedicated to Our Lady Help of Christians and St. Denis. These Patrons of the Church are represented by statues at either end of the reredos, whose spiral canopy over the throne rises to a height of 30 feet from the ground. A flight of steps on either



HIGH ALTAR OF THE CHURCH OF OUR LADY AND ST. DENIS.



side lead up to the back of the throne. The front of the Altar has a representation, after Fra Angelico, of the Institution of the Holy Eucharist. The execution in Caen stone was by Messrs. Farmer, and was admirably worked out. The front of the reredos was afterwards covered with carving in a diaper pattern, and gilded by Mr. Chatto himself with great taste and care.

Of course the whole fabric was very incomplete and damp, and it taxed the capabilities of Mother Rose Columba and the Sisters to their full extent to make it ready for the opening. The Choir and Serving boys came over from Plymouth by an early train; all the Canons, more than half the clergy of the diocese were present, and the Benedictines, Dominicans, and Jesuits were all represented. Mother Provincial and four other Sisters arrived a few days before, bringing banners and other decorations for the ceremony. Admission was by ticket, and every available space was occupied, the orphans and the Sisters being in the triforium and Nuns' Choir. Canon Graham conducted the choir, and Father Robert Brindle, afterwards chaplain of the forces in the Egyptian campaign, was master of ceremonies. The Bishop and the sacred ministers wore a set of vestments presented to his lordship by Mother Margaret. The Bishop sang Pontifical High Mass, and after the Gospel a very striking sermon was preached by Bishop Ullathorne on the meaning of the ceremonies used at the consecration of a Church. A collection of £26 was made

for the Orphanage; and the Bishops and clergy and many of the laity were hospitably entertained by Mr. Chatto at the Daison.

On the following Sunday a High Mass was sung according to the Dominican Rite, and Father Sweeney, O.S.B., preached in the morning, and Dr. Northcote in the evening. The evening services continued to be well attended, and several Protestants began to frequent the Church, and by degrees some came for private instruction, and became Catholics.

On the day when the Altar was consecrated, Mother Provincial sent as a present to Mr. and Mrs. Chatto a very beautiful set of vestments for their own private chapel. They had been planned by Mother Margaret, and were much appreciated by those for whom they had been made.

On March 1, 1870, Mother Provincial again visited St. Mary Church, and, to the great joy of the Community, announced that it had been decided to begin the Convent at once, and Mr. Hansom was making the plans. The Community was, all that spring, in great anxiety about the precarious state of their Superior, who was unable to take part in the Holy Week services. It was about this time that her title of "Sister Vicareess" was changed to that of "Mother Vicareess." As soon as her health became a little stronger, she set to work to arrange for the Corpus Christi services, which her intense devotion to the Blessed Sacrament prompted her to have celebrated with all the solemnity possible. All had to be got. She placed a box near the entrance

of the Church, and put over it in large letters the first few verses of Exod. xxv. The appeal was responded to. The next day Mrs. Bengough gave a cheque for £10, and afterwards added another £20, in order to procure a handsome velvet canopy, with suitable brass poles, and little bells on the top of them. Great pains were taken with the decorations of the Altars, and in the garden a temporary Altar had been erected under the verandah. In the evening of the Sunday within the Octave, a Procession was formed in which all the Sisters as well as the orphans walked, and the Blessed Sacrament was carried through a large but respectful crowd of people round the garden, and Benediction was given to a large assembly kneeling on the lawn. Mother Vicaress perceived a Protestant with his hat on; she flew at him, and indignantly pulled off the offending hat, with some short reproof that made the man feel quite abashed at his unintentional act of disrespect. Canon Windeyer came up from Torquay to assist at the Procession, and his kind and cordial interest and co-operation in all that promoted the interests of the Convent and Mission at St. Mary Church contributed in no small degree to the progress of the Faith.

On July 12 the new Convent building was commenced, and Mother Vicaress and her Sisters employed their evening recreation in digging, as best they could, at the trenches that had been marked out by the workmen. Kind friends came forward, and contributed towards the expenses, the Bishop giving £75. His lordship returned this summer from Rome, after being

some eight months in attendance at the General Council. The breaking out of the war between France and Prussia prevented the reassembling of the Council, and led to the seizure of Rome by the Italians. The realities of war were, to a certain extent, brought home to the Community by the demand for linen and other necessities for the wounded, and they formed themselves into a centre for collecting and preparing these things, for which the Community received special thanks from the Central Ladies' Committee in London. Later on they gave hospitality for several months to a French Dominican Sister, whose Convent near Paris had been occupied and destroyed during the war.

The new Convent, or rather that portion of it which had been built—the refectory, kitchen, and dormitory—was blessed on Holy Saturday, 1871, and the Community moved into it in the course of the month of May. The Corpus Christi Procession was again held, and attended by as numerous and well-behaved a crowd as in the preceding year. The same might be said of the Procession in 1872. But the priest of the Mission had taken it for granted that a Procession was allowed, and had not thought it necessary to ask permission. Consequently, when in 1873 the Bishop happened to be in the neighbourhood, and saw the preparations, his lordship took the priest to task for not having asked leave, and forbade the Procession afterwards to go outside the Church, fearing that some irreverence might be shown to the Blessed Sacrament by the crowd.

In the course of the summer of 1871, the old tower of the Parish Church, the last remnant of the ancient Church of the time of Richard II., was pulled down to make way for a grander tower, more in keeping with the new nave and chancel. In the new tower was placed a statue of Our Lady, with her Divine Child holding out His arms towards the Convent, as if welcoming the new Priory founded in honour of His Blessed Mother.

In June, Mother Vicaress attended a meeting of all the heads of the Houses in the Congregation held at Stone, where they made a Retreat under Bishop Ullathorne, who in that month kept the 25th anniversary of his episcopate. In his reply to the address from the pen of Dr. Newman, and illuminated at Stone, the venerable Bishop speaks of that part of it which alludes to his care for the nuns, and says :—

“You have touchingly alluded to the special care I have devoted to the Religious Communities of this diocese. Here, I confess, you have touched a sensitive chord in my heart. If priests need both a firm and fatherly support from their Bishops, how much more do those of the tender sex who have left all things in this world for the love of God and the service of the poor, need such. They have no one to look to for protection and guidance except their Bishop. And it is not every one who can understand the requirements of a life so singular and so supernatural. The secret of comprehending it is only to be derived from a profound veneration for the religious character and self-devotedness with which their sublime vocation has endowed them. Hence you will find that the Church has in all ages attached

the greatest importance to this function of the episcopal charge ; and that the most saintly prelates of the Church (amongst whom I cannot be numbered) have been the most conspicuous in their solicitous care for the spouses of Christ.”¹

One of the results of the meeting at Stone was to cause the Community at St. Mary Church to be elevated into a Priory, so that its Superior came back with all the dignity and authority of a Prioress, with a Sub-Prioress and Vicaress under her.

The Catholic congregation at St. Mary Church suffered a loss on October 27 by the death of Mrs. Duke, the sister of Mrs. Bonar and of the Dowager-Duchess of Argyll. She had for many years been a devoted member of the Irvingite body, but had been received into the true Fold on the anniversary of the opening of the Church. A solemn Requiem was sung for the repose of her soul, after which her remains were buried in the Protestant churchyard. *R.I.P.* Another friend and benefactress of the Community, Miss Sophia Randolph, passed away on the 1st of May 1872. She had contributed generously towards the building of the Convent, and had left £300 to the Community. In August the Community lost their Extraordinary Confessor, Canon Agar, for many years Chaplain to the Canonesses of St. Augustine at Abbotsleigh ; and, in the following January, Canon Windeyer, a faithful friend of the Community, died, three months after resigning the Mission of Torquay. About this time the

¹ “ Letters of Archbishop Ullathorne,” pp. 258, 259.

Sisters gave up the charge of the School at Torquay, which was placed under a secular mistress.

A Provincial Chapter was held in May 1873, lasting ten days, which Mother Rose Columba attended in spite of her weak state of health. Soon after her return home a proposition came from the manager of the Terra-Cotta Works at Watcombe, that the orphans should do some of the painting which was required in the decoration of the fancy articles made. The things were sent up to be painted; but after a few weeks it was found inconvenient to send things to and fro; but the manager, perceiving that some of the Sisters had considerable artistic talent, wished them to do freehand work for the Company. A Drawing-Class was also commenced for the benefit of the girls who worked at the Pottery, some of whom came from Stoke-upon-Trent, and had known the Sisters there. The name of Stoke was a passport to the heart of Mother Rose Columba, and she took the greatest interest in these girls. While learning drawing from the nuns, they also learned some Christian doctrine; and by degrees some of them asked for more regular instruction, and were received into the Church. It was not to be expected that this would go on long without opposition. The Protestant Vicar became alarmed, and influence was brought to bear on the manager of the Terra-Cotta Works to break off his connection with the Priory. The intercourse with the families of the workmen there, however, continued, and resulted in many conversions. In the course of 1874 the Bishop gave Confirmation to

fifty persons, many of them converts. In one family, two children, their mother, their grandmother, and their great-grandmother were all confirmed together. The Church had been adorned with a large crucifix, carved out of a massive beam which had once formed part of Nôtre Dame Cathedral in Paris, and also with a very fine set of Stations of the Cross. Both were gifts from Mr. Chatto, who also filled the windows in the sanctuary with stained glass. . Later on in the year a beautiful statue of Our Lady of Lourdes was sent by Mons.^r Rainbeaux, a French gentleman, who, with his English wife, had taken refuge in Torquay during the reign of the Commune in Paris, and who has been a true friend and benefactor to the Convent and the Orphanage. His name is well known to all the pious institutions in Paris. The statue came in time to be carried in procession round the Church on the Octave of Rosary Sunday.

The early part of 1874 had been marked in the Congregation by their venerable Father, Bishop Ullathorne, keeping the Jubilee of his religious profession as a Benedictine; and the latter part of it was marked by the final revision of their Constitutions, before being presented for approval by the Holy See. The Chapter held at Stone for this purpose in November, after concluding its business, celebrated the Silver Jubilee of the Prioress Provincial, Mother Imelda Poole, amid the general congratulations and rejoicings of all the members of the Congregation.

These rejoicings were, at St. Mary Church, mingled

with considerable sorrow and anxiety on account of the extremely precarious state of the health of their beloved Prioress. She had never really recovered from the effects of the operation in 1867. She suffered at times most excruciating pain both in her head and in her heart. Dr. Radclyffe Hall, considered the most skilful physician then in Torquay, pronounced that her heart was in so critical a state that she was not likely to live two years, and that the walls of the heart might give way at any moment. And now a tumour was forming again in dangerous proximity to the parotid artery, so that another operation was necessary. It was decided that a specialist of eminence at Birmingham should be consulted, and he arranged to perform the operation at Stone on the 3rd of December. The Community, and indeed the whole of the Catholics in St. Mary Church, united in earnest prayers for one whose life was so precious to all; and at 10 A.M., the hour when the operation was to commence, we all said the Fifteen Mysteries of the Rosary before the statue of Our Lady of Lourdes, and sang the Litany of Loreto, and a hymn to Our Lady. Scarcely had we finished, when a telegram brought the joyful intelligence that the operation had been successfully performed, and very hearty were the thanksgivings to God for this great mercy to us all. She slowly recovered her strength, and returned to St. Mary Church on the 14th of January.

A characteristic incident of the operation was the following. When Mother Provincial and Mother Rose Columba were in the surgeon's waiting-room in Bir-

mingham, the latter took up one of the books on the table, and remarked, "Here is Darwin's book." Some recollection of this seems to have remained in her mind; for when she recovered consciousness after the operation, and was still under the influence of chloroform, she looked the doctor in the face, and said, "I hope you are not a Darwinite?"

In May 1875, Mother Provincial held a Visitation of the Convent for the first time, and concluded by congratulating the Sisters that there were but few things to correct, and that they lived under a mild but firm government, and apart from the noise and distraction of a large town. Her words were: "May all future Prioress Provincials find as little to correct, and as much to praise." While saying this her emotion almost overpowered her. She specially praised the Silence. Soon after this, letters arrived announcing that the Constitutions had been sent from Rome with the approval of the Master-General of the Order, who had made a few corrections in them.

In October of this year the completion of the Convent, which had been decided upon by the Chapter in the previous year, was actually commenced by the same builder, Mr. Eddles, who had built the Church. The estimate was £3000.

The winter of 1875-76 was a very dismal one at St. Mary Church. In spite of all the precautions that had been taken to avoid infection, two children, who had been allowed to go and see their mother in Torquay, caught the scarlet fever in a neighbour's house, and ten

days afterwards developed signs of the disease. Every effort was made to isolate them ; but it was too late, and one after another of the orphans sickened, until there were thirty children down with the fever—more than half the whole number. Dr. Steele, the generous and kind-hearted medical man, who for so many years has given the benefit of his attention and skill to the Sisters and orphans, was unremitting in his care. The medical officer of the district, Mr. Rhind, gave all the assistance in his power, and afterwards published a report, in which he warmly eulogised the admirable exertions made by the Sisters in grappling with this epidemic. The Sister at the head of the Orphanage consented to be isolated from the rest of the Community, and devoted herself exclusively to the sick. Mother Prioress alone entered the rooms set apart for the sick and the convalescent. Through the mercy of God and the good nursing, none of the children died of the fever, though it left behind it in some cases seeds of constitutional weakness which developed into consumption. One of these cases was that of the child of a woman in the village who had caught the infection, and whom Mother Prioress kindly took to be nursed with the orphans. The Sisters regarded it as a special proof of the kind Providence of God for them in this trying time, that the number of lady boarders in the Guest-House was never so large as during this winter, when it might have been supposed that all would hasten away from the neighbourhood of the fever. Some kind friends in London and elsewhere collected over £100 to help them in this

emergency. A letter written by Mother Rose Columba at the time shows how severe the trial was:—

GOD ALONE.

J. M. ✠ D. C.

“MY VERY DEAR SISTER,—I am sure you will not find it difficult to believe when I say I have not written any Christmas letters. The fever, having come to add to the daily business, has put writing almost out of the question. I know you will care for St. Mary Church news, and you also deserve something in return for your long and welcome letter, so I will begin our history, to be continued as time and opportunity serve. On the 17th of December we were (in the Orphanage) ‘as blithe as blithe could be.’ Grand designs for Church decorations, but no prospect of their being carried out. Well now! In this happy state we retired on Friday night. On Saturday at 6.30 A.M. a little child, who had lately arrived at the Orphanage, quietly went to heaven, not three years of age, so quite happy about its soul, but the sudden departure had its inconveniences. Mr. Steele came, and was so kind. He saw the difficulty, and did his best to help us. In the afternoon he came again, and brought Mrs. Steele, who is inclined to be very friendly. It was at this second visit that he pronounced Fanny and Rosy C—— to have scarlet fever. Must be moved at once. Where? Infirmary. Doubtful—would go and see. S. F. Joseph and I started in a midge—scarlet fever not admitted. Bethought me of the Mother, and drove about in search of her for almost an hour; found her; she could do nothing. I said, she must. She would come in an hour to fetch the children, we to pay expenses! I go home, wait two hours; no Mrs. C——. At last she arrives with paper from ‘medical officer,’ to say, ‘children

not to be removed; he would arrange next day.' The children had been put in the refectory, as most conveniently near to door. There they must stay. Next day was 'confusion worse confounded,' and ended in the children's remaining. Next Annie T—— ill; then Josephine and Lizzie P——. Next day three more, and so on, for many days. Mr. Steele so kind, and so anxious to stop infection. At last, one day, Christmas Eve, he gave it up, at least as far as the Orphanage was concerned, and said, 'Try and shut it off from the house.' Mrs. K. was wringing her hands: 'What will I do if my Polly's taken from me? I must see her,' and all sorts of uncomfortable things. Church decoration was done, and so pretty, prettier than ever. A short sermon on the sorrows of the first Christmas night, rather sad. Christmas Day, Church very empty, though nearly every one, I think, had been to Holy Communion at the early Masses. Christmas dinner sad also; several orphans absent, and more evidently sickening. On—on—on—more each day. Panic outside; and advice given gratis! Most of our friends very kind, thinking more of the Sisters than even the children.

January 31st.—This state of things went on until the Epiphany, when the clouds cleared away a little. In the meantime we had taken little Polly MacB. Mrs. MacB.'s John was 'wild' with fever; and as, of course, his sister being with him, must have the fever too, we offered to take her (first consulting Mr. Steele). Poor child! she was so pleased to come, and looked forward to having a bed near little Josephine; but, when she came, it was found she could not be in the dormitory with the other sick children, and she had to be put in the washing-room. This was rather desolate; and there she died, after two days' illness. Her poor mother was with her, and very grateful for the little that had been done. This poor child seems to have been the victim; for, I may say, from that time the fever ceased, or almost. We had had to move into the lower

dormitory—three rows of beds. Thirty-one patients in all—Lucy V—— being one of those most ill, though not with scarlet fever. It was a sad time ; yet every one (of the Community) kept pretty bright. On the Epiphany we had a Christmas Tree, and every one was surprised and pleased. S. J. Margaret joined us on the occasion. Sister A. J. made a resolve ‘next Christmas *night* to put the vestments out in the *morning*.’ Will you ask M. Vicarress of Stoke at what hour she is to begin ? It was such a relief to go from the sights and smells (disinfectants) of the Orphanage into the Church for a few minutes. I thought it had never looked so beautiful, or felt so restful. We have been quite shut off from parish work.

The Chattos have been so kind during the fever. Mrs. Chatto would come and see us in the thick of it. Now if this letter has been long a-coming, it is equally long now it has come. You deserve this long letter, for yours was the only Christmas one I received, except from the Prioress at Clifton.—Ever your devoted Sister and ‘old Mother,’

“S. M. ROSE COLUMBA.”

In February 1876, after long consideration, it was thought prudent to give up the House at Clifton, which had been so intimately connected with the early days of the Congregation, where so many had made their novitiate, and within the cloister of which several of the Sisters lay buried. Mother Rose Columba, who had worked so hard at Clifton, felt the pain of this step on the part of the Community very much. She went to see the place once again, and to confer with the Mother Provincial. The last public service in the Convent Chapel, dedicated to St. Catherine, was on the Feast of St. Catherine. Among other furniture of the

Clifton Convent which came to St. Mary Church was a beautiful oak carving of Our Lady of Dolours, which Mother Rose Columba placed in the Chapter Room. The Convent was afterwards taken by the Dominican Sisters from Stroud, in whose possession it still remains.

In September, a Retreat was given to the nuns by Father King, O.P., at that time Provincial of the Dominican Order, and afterwards Archbishop of Trinidad. About this time the Sisters began to occupy the new Community Room in the front of the House, with a splendid view from its windows, taking in the Dartmoor Hills on one side, and a glimpse of Torbay on the other. The room hitherto used by the Community was now turned into an Infirmary, and was occupied by two aged Sisters, who came down here to die.

In the beginning of 1877 the Very Rev. Dr. Northcote, whose failing health had obliged him to resign the Presidentship of Oscott College, came to stay at St. Mary Church, and laboured hard at a new and much-enlarged edition of the English *Roma Sotteranea*. He remained there until the middle of Lent, when he accompanied Mr. and Mrs. Chatto on a visit to Rome. Later on, Mr. Arthur Mayo, V.C., went to Rome as the representative of St. Mary Church to present our offerings to the Holy Father, Pius IX., on the occasion of his Episcopal Jubilee.

In August 1877 the new Constitutions arrived from Rome fully confirmed by the Pope, and preparations

were made for their being printed and formally promulgated at the Provincial Chapter which was held in November. As Mother Rose Columba had been elected Prioress in 1871, and re-elected in 1874, it was thought that she could not remain there any longer, as by the Constitutions a Prioress could not be re-elected a second time without special recourse being had to the Master-General of the Order. But it was decided that by virtue of the newly approved Constitutions everything began *de novo*, and the past terms of office counted for nothing. Accordingly, to the great joy of the Community, and of all the Catholics at St. Mary Church, Mother Rose Columba returned for a fresh term of office after the Provincial Chapter, from which she returned on the 1st of December.

The great event of the beginning of 1878 was the death of Pius IX., whose Requiem was sung in St. Mary Church, and afterwards with a large concourse of clergy and people in the Cathedral at Plymouth. Then came the anxious time of the assembly of the Conclave, and the election of Pope Leo XIII. And then the Catholics seemed able to breathe freely again, as we saw the new Pope lay such a firm and intelligent grasp upon all the tangled questions of the day.

Bishop Ullathorne had presided over the Provincial Chapter, and had been much consoled at the final settlement of the Constitutions. He wrote about it thus :—

“Your Chapter was a happy time, both from the spirit it brought out and the work which it completed. I might now sing my *Nunc Dimittis*; for what has more than anything

else kept me to this diocese has been the wish to see this work finally settled. When I read the Life of St. Jane Chantal on board ship, as a cabin boy, and caught the first idea of conventual life as a complete and perfect notion, I never thought that I should have to be concerned in any work such as I then dreamed of as the sublimest to which a human being could be called. Such a work seemed to me at an infinite distance from a mortal of my stamp. . . . How it ever got into my mind I cannot explain. But neither can I explain how I was ever brought to such a work as helping in the foundation of a Religious Congregation.

"Undoubtedly your Constitutions, now promulgated, are a great work, bringing into harmony things new and old, and uniting life in the nineteenth with life in the thirteenth century, upon a great model whose life is Divine. Blessed are they who are called to a Religious Institute in its first fervour, whose spirit yet rises above every form in which that religion is cast. In its character it is like the fervour of the primitive Christians."¹

I have sometimes heard it said, and that by people who knew her well, that Mother Rose Columba had a vocation to something higher than that set forth in the Constitutions of the "English Congregation of St. Catherine of Sienna." I cannot concur in that opinion. That she set before herself a higher ideal of the Religious Life than many members of that Congregation have drawn from their Constitutions is quite possible; but she never found her own spirit in the least cramped or fettered by any of those Constitutions. Sometimes the Bishop allowed her and two or three

¹ "Abp. Ullathorne's Letters," pp. 370, 371.

of her Sisters to spend the day at the Benedictine Abbey at Teignmouth, where she formed a close friendship with the saintly Abbess Romana, and Dame Michael, both of whom preceded her to their reward. At other times she visited the Canonesses of St. Augustine at Abbotsleigh, where she once stayed for several days. She loved much the life and spirit which filled both these fervent Communities; yet she often expressed her thankfulness that God had called her to be a Dominican rather than a Benedictine or an Augustinian, and said that visiting other Communities always made her love her own with increased ardour. There is a danger to some Religious in measuring their Rule by their own possibly too limited conception of it, and it would be well for them to remember that its "spirit rises above every form in which that religion is cast." We shall see the bearing of this later on.

In 1878 Bishop Ullathorne's health began seriously to alarm his friends; and in the following year, soon after having the happiness of seeing his friend Dr. Newman honoured with the Cardinal's hat, he obtained from the Pope the assistance of an Auxiliary Bishop, and was requested to nominate one for that office. After Dr. Illsley's Consecration he devoted himself almost exclusively to the care of the Convents, until, ten years later, he felt obliged to resign his See. His book on "The Endowments of Man" was published in 1880; his "great book" on Humility, "The Groundwork of the Christian Virtues," came out three years

afterwards ; and his last book, on "Christian Patience," was published in 1886. He spent a good deal of time at Stone, and two or three times visited St. Mary Church. As the "Vicar of the General," he was acting Superior of the Congregation, and all matters of importance were referred to him. Every member of the Congregation had the privilege of writing privately to him upon any matter that she desired, and he found time to attend to all these communications.

His visits to St. Mary Church were always times of great happiness to the Community. Though he did not hold a regular Visitation, he made a point of seeing each Sister separately, and united the kind indulgence of a true Father with the wise and searching insight of an experienced physician of souls. He used also to go up to the Community Room in the evening and entertain the Sisters with stories of his many adventures by land and sea. He visited St. Mary Church in September 1876, when he was full of his "great book." It was very beautiful to see the fatherly pride that the old Bishop took in his spiritual children. He could not bear any one to remark any faults in them, and delighted in speaking of their virtues and good works. The present writer ventured to observe to Mother Rose Columba that they would be very ungrateful if they did not bear a warm affection towards so loving a Father. She replied :—

"I was glad that you should come in contact with our good Father and Bishop. His mind is like a rich mine that easily yields its treasures. Just a little tact is neces-

sary to get at them. He does not spoil us, though no one who really knows him can doubt of his true affection for us. I think his visit has been a real pleasure to him. . . . I think he was quite satisfied with the state of affairs here, though he did not tell me so. We know very well how much he cares for us ; but he really does not spoil us. Not that he says very severe things ; but he as carefully abstains from any commendation in our *hearing*. The fact of his affection would make him all the more keen-sighted to our failings. Why are we often sorry that a person falls short in some way ? Because we care for them. One to whom we were indifferent might do the same thing over and over again, and we might perhaps wish it had not been done, and then trouble ourselves no more about it. But when our own familiar friend is in question, then the regret goes deeply down."

She then goes into a little dissertation on the faults of good people, and says :—

"I have come to the conclusion that the American Bishop was right that 'there is a great deal of human nature in everybody.' And when this human nature is too rudely kept down, or ignored before the supernaturalisation (if there is such a word) takes place, it gives a hardness, not to say a repulsiveness, to the character. It seems to be a process that most good people have to go through—the disagreeable time of trying to be good, and making others feel how hard it is to be good and pleasant at the same time. I am afraid it *is*. And that is why so many sacrifice the being good to the being pleasant. Yet I, who am neither good nor pleasant, have been surprised to find the liberty of tongue that really good people can give themselves, seemingly without scruple.

"I wonder what you will think of all this production.

I used to have greater difficulty in writing to you than to any one I knew! But now I say just what comes into my head, having overcome all human respect on this point."

The fact was, that her writing at all was an act of great charity. I was at the time watching by my father's deathbed, and her true feminine instinct taught her that the most effective mode of comfort to one who was losing his last very near relation was to interest him in the lives and thoughts of others, and to prove to him that he would not be alone in the world. She therefore wrote to me very frequently, and kept me fully acquainted with all that was going on at St. Mary Church, and gave me an epitome of Father King's Retreat.

The year 1877 was marked in the little world of the Priory at St. Mary Church by two deaths which Mother Rose Columba long remembered. One was that of Miss Emily Bengough, whose mother had been a kind friend and benefactor to the Convent, and who had died in 1875. Her daughter did not long survive her. She had been devotedly attached to her mother, and after her death seemed to have little left to live for. She died of consumption, after an illness most sweetly and patiently borne. It was on the Feast of the Purification. The priest gave her Holy Viaticum. With a face lighted up with love and ardent longing, she received our Lord; and then folding her hands tightly on her breast, she closed her eyes to make her thanksgiving, and never opened them again to this world. She was

much attached to Mother Rose Columba ; and, though she had never given a hint to any of us of her intention, she left her £1000, which enabled Mother Prioress to build the present Schoolroom, with the large room over it, capable of being isolated from the rest of the Orphanage in case of an epidemic.

The other death—though within a year after that of Miss Bengough, was really at the beginning of 1878—took place in the Orphanage. Mary le Bosquet, a child of thirteen, had been in the Infirmary for a year, slowly getting weaker—a consumption made its inroads upon her. She had edified every one by her patience and unselfishness all through her long illness. The disease seemed to quicken her mental powers, and she was full of intelligence and interest in everything. She made her first Communion during the year of her illness, and the Bishop had kindly given her Confirmation in the Infirmary. On the day she died she distributed all her pious pictures, choosing one for each of the Sisters herself, and writing their names on the back, until she was prevented, as it was too much for her strength. She responded to the prayers until her voice failed, and then she bowed her head when the Holy Name was mentioned, and retained perfect consciousness to the last.

Mother Prioress often said that she had been present at many deathbeds, but the three that seemed to her the most happy were those of Sister Mary Philomena Berkeley, her Novice-Mistress ; of Emily Bengough ; and little Mary le Bosquet.

Dr. Northcote had spent the winter at St. Mary Church. He came in October 1877, and left in May 1878; after which he took charge of the Mission at Stoke-upon-Trent, and occupied again the Presbytery which he had himself built.

Mother Imelda Poole, in all her visits to St. Mary Church, had deeply regretted that her Sisters should have so small and ill-furnished a Choir, and in the course of this year was able to arrange for the Choir to be enlarged, and the Chapter Room beyond it to be made available for its original destination. The Choir was not really put into order until 1883. It was in 1878 that Mr. Chatto's purpose of completing the Church was actually carried out. This necessitated the demolition of the old Villa. It was not without some regrets that the Sisters saw the place endeared to them by many associations being razed to the ground. But the foundations of the tower, resting upon a bed of concrete twenty feet deep, soon began to excite their interest, and when it rose above the ground, and its beauties began to manifest themselves, they were stirred up to renewed efforts to find the means of building the Guest-House, between the Church and the Convent, in such a style as to be in keeping with the magnificent front of the Church.

In October 1878 the Bishop of Plymouth drew up and executed a formal document recognising the full rights of the Sisters to the Church built upon their property, even though a baptismal font should be erected in it, but stipulating that, in case of the Sisters leaving

the Convent, they should hand over the Church and Presbytery to the Bishop or his successor on payment by him of the simple value of the land on which the buildings stand.

In February 1879, Mother Rose Columba was laid up with a sharp attack of inflammation of the lungs, from which she had hardly recovered, when she was again in considerable danger from an attack of pleurisy, which so alarmed the Sisters that they telegraphed for Mother Provincial. Soon after her arrival the patient rallied; but she was not able to appear in Choir until Easter Sunday. In May the first Lay Sisters arrived at St. Mary Church. In August, Mother Prioress was able to go to Stone, where Bishop Hedley gave a Retreat that made a lasting impression upon most of those who heard it. Mother Rose Columba made her Community acquainted with the substance of its lessons in her discourses at Chapter for several Sundays after her return. It was during this absence that Father Denis Byrne, formerly a Trappist monk at Mount Melleray, died of mortification after an operation for hernia. He had been the first chaplain that the Sisters had at the beginning of St. Mary's Priory, and he had been chaplain at the Daison for the last nine years, and had assisted on Sundays in the Church, generally singing the High Mass. The Bishop preached at his funeral, and gave a touching outline of his quiet, retiring life. *R.I.P.*

The Convent Annals record: "In the beginning of October, Mother Prioress advised us to have

recourse to St. Joseph, and ask his special help for the building of our Cloister. St. Joseph heard our petition; for scarcely had a few days elapsed than Mr. Chatto announced his generous intention of building the Cloister for us, between the Choir and Convent, and completing the portion of the building connected with it. This was a marked answer to prayer: a week before, there did not seem the remotest chance of means to build this part of the Cloister."

Again, in February 1880, Mother Rose Columba was prostrated with an attack of illness similar to that of last year, and again the Sisters had recourse to Our Lady of Lourdes, with seventeen days of prayer, in honour of her seventeen Apparitions. At the end of the devotions they had the consolation of seeing Mother Prioress assist at the *Magnificat* which they sang in thanksgiving.

This year, the twenty-fifth anniversary of the Consecration of the Bishop of Plymouth, a committee was formed to arrange the testimonial to be presented to his lordship on the occasion. The Community at St. Mary Church undertook to illuminate the address, the whole designs for which, and some of the miniatures, were the work of Mother Rose Columba. Most of the illumination was executed by Sister Francis Philomena Ullathorne. It was much admired, and contained miniature paintings of Plymouth Cathedral, St. Mary Church, St. Scholastica's Abbey, St. Augustine's Priory, and Courtfield, the ancestral home where the Bishop passed his childhood. The testimonial and

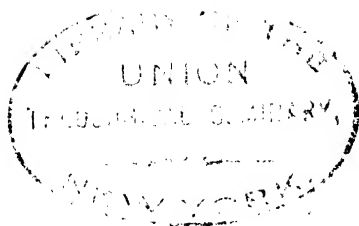
address were presented to his lordship on the 23rd of September.

Through the kind generosity of the Bishop, who advanced them £500 on very easy terms, the Sisters were this year enabled to commence the Guest-House, and Mother Rose Columba collected among her friends a sum of money sufficient to pay for the Altar of St. Dominic, opposite to the Nuns' Choir.

On February 6, 1881, the partition wall having been taken down, the whole Church was solemnly opened. Pontifical High Mass was sung by the Bishop, who also preached on the occasion. The Church is now 133 feet long, and the pillars supporting the gallery at the west end form a very striking feature in it. The Lady Chapel is separated from the south aisle by a stone screen, and below the Lady Chapel is a crypt in Norman architecture, which was destined for the burial-place of the founder and his family. Towards the end of Lent, a font designed by young Mr. Hansom was completed in local marbles by Mr. Blackler, at the expense of the clergy and people of the congregation, in time for the solemn Blessing on Holy Saturday. The beautiful spire of the Church was completed in June, and surmounted with a large copper cross, twelve feet in height, and communicating with the lightning-conductor. The Sisters watched its ascent from the garden, praying earnestly for the safety of the men engaged upon the somewhat perilous work of fixing it in its place, 175 feet from the ground.



TOWER OF CHURCH OF OUR LADY AND ST DENIS.



The Feast of St. Rose was kept with unusual solemnity this year, as it was the day fixed for the Silver Jubilee of Mother Rose Columba. Great preparations had been made for it, and many offerings were sent from the people in the village and elsewhere; among other things were a statue of St. Rose for the Cloister, a set of gold vestments made in Rome, a piano, which afterwards followed her to Adelaide, and a celestial globe, as she was known to be very fond of astronomy. Several priests came to assist at the High Mass, and some Dutch Sisters who had been staying at the Convent presented a Processional Cross, and sang some Dutch songs in her honour. These nuns came to learn English, and endeared themselves greatly to their English Sisters.

Mother Prioress had promised Our Lady that, if she would obtain for them funds to build the Guest-House, the Community would say the whole Fifteen Mysteries of the Rosary every day in October. Through the kindness of Mons. Rainbeaux, and the generosity of a lady who afterwards entered the Novitiate at Stone, they were enabled to complete this work, and began to fulfil their promise to Our Lady. But the month of October brought them a great and unexpected sorrow.

Mother Mary Imelda Poole had arrived at St. Mary Church on the 23rd of September, and had delighted the Community by her interesting account of the visit of the Master-General of the Order to Stone, where he

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had made a regular Visitation of the Convent, and had given a most kind and instructive address to the nuns afterwards. Mother Imelda gave the substance of his words to the Community at St. Mary Church, on Sunday the 25th, and again on October 9th, when she insisted strongly on "the spirit of generous self-sacrifice, and that when the offering cost most we should the more fervently rejoice to make it, and that as Religious our lives ought to be lives of continual sacrifice." The next day at dinner she seemed unwell, and consented to go and lie down, when she slept heavily. On the Tuesday she was very drowsy; but the doctor, who saw her twice, did not think there was any cause for alarm, and on the Wednesday she seemed better. In the evening Dr. Steele said that one lung was slightly inflamed. Mother Prioress persuaded her to have her bed made in the Community Room, so that one of the Sisters could be there at night. The inflammation increased the next day, and Mother Prioress remained with her all day, and Mother Francis Raphael Drane was telegraphed for. In the evening she was told that there was danger, and she made her Confession, and asked for the Last Sacraments. The pain increased so much that the doctor advised an injection of morphia, and when the priest entered her room with the Blessed Sacrament to give her Holy Viaticum, she was in a heavy sleep from which it was found impossible to arouse her. The Blessed Sacrament was kept for some time in the room, in the hope that she might

awake; but at length, when the arrival of the Sisters from Stone failed to bring her back to consciousness, Extreme Unction was given her, and the Last Blessing. The Sisters recited the Rosary at intervals, and sang the *Salve*, according to the custom of the Order for those in their agony. She gave no sign of consciousness, but a little before 2 A.M. she was only able to breathe with great difficulty; the Community assembled round her bed, and noticed a sweet smile pass over her features as she breathed her last on Friday, October 14.

A Requiem Mass was sung at 7.30 A.M. for the repose of her soul, and on the Saturday her brother-in-law, Dr. Northcote, arrived, and was deeply affected as he gazed upon her countenance, still wearing the sweet smile with which she had quitted this world. On Sunday evening she was brought down to the Church, and the Sisters ranged themselves on either side of the coffin and sang the Dirge, which was followed by a sermon and the Absolutions. On Monday morning at six another Requiem was sung, and then the sorrowing Community bade the last farewell to the remains of their beloved Mother as the hearse bore them away to the station to be conveyed to Stone, where she was buried on the Wednesday, a Requiem being sung at St. Mary Church on the same day.

The present writer may be permitted to express his regret that no record of the life of this highly gifted woman has yet been published. In early life she had been intimately associated with the principal leaders in

the Oxford movement. Cardinal Newman, in his *Apologia*,¹ thus speaks of her :—

“There was a gifted and deeply earnest lady who, in a parabolical account of that time (1843), has described both my conduct and that of such as herself. In a singularly graphic, amusing vision of pilgrims, who were making their way across a bleak common in great discomfort, and who were ever warned against, yet continually nearing, ‘the king’s highway’ on the right, she says : ‘All my fears and disquiets were speedily renewed by seeing the most daring of our leaders (the same who had forced his way through the palisade, and in whose courage and sagacity we all put implicit trust) suddenly stop short, and declare that he would go no further. He did not, however, take the leap at once, but quietly sat down on the top of the fence, with his feet hanging towards the road, as if he meant to take his time about it, and let himself down easily.’”

Comparatively few readers of this passage know that Mother Imelda Poole was the lady referred to. She was a learned Greek scholar, and used at one time to do much work for Dr. Pusey in collating and verifying his quotations from the Latin and Greek Fathers. But all her learning and remarkable mental powers were so modestly hidden under the veil of humility, that the principal characteristic which struck those who came in contact with her was her childlike simplicity and innocence, which remained in all its freshness even in old age. Dr. Ullathorne writes of her :—

“Had you ever seen her, you would have been struck with her spiritual beauty and sweetness. Yet the gentle-

¹ Page 348, 1st edition.

ness of her modest demeanour covered a man's mind, and a man's learning and judgment. . . . In her novitiate Mother Margaret gave her a severe humiliation about her learning, and sent her to work in the kitchen. She replied, 'Dear Mother, I have learned everything but humility, and I have come to learn that here.' She had studied both Greek and Latin classics. Plato indeed helped her into the Church, as he did St. Augustine; she had a great and accurate knowledge of the Scriptures, was versed in the sense of the great spiritual writers, and knew the diversities of the great Religious rules.

"She drew up the Constitutions from the great sea of Dominican law, including that of the General Chapters since 1212: the work passed under the revision of the General and his Chapter without alteration, and has¹ obtained a celebrity in the Order. She has governed the Congregation since Mother Margaret's departure with a justness, power, and sweetness that is marvellous. She was strong in justice, calm in judgment, sweet in affection, gentle in word and life, with perfect innocence from childhood. . . . In short, I am describing the most harmonious, and therefore most perfect character I ever knew. The last words of Mother Margaret to me on her death-bed were of her. She said, 'There never was a better woman. She was my dearest friend, and through these long years I never saw a fault in her, even by accident, nor an error of judgment.'"¹

On November 25, Mother Francis Raphael Drane, the accomplished author of "Christian Schools and Scholars," and of many other works which adorn modern Catholic literature, was unanimously elected Prioress Provincial, and her election was at once confirmed by Bishop Ullathorne. She had been Mother

¹ "Letters," pp. 416, 417.

Imelda's right hand for many years, and was thoroughly acquainted with everything relating to the Congregation and each of its different Convents.

January 1882 will always be sadly memorable in the annals of St. Mary Church as the time of the death of the generous founder of the Church, Mr. William John Potts Chatto. He had been getting weaker for some months, and had been suffering much pain from an affection of the heart. For several weeks he had been unable to go out, and his chaplain, the Rev. John Keily, had said Mass at the Daison on Sundays. Still, he had not been confined to his room until the middle of January. The Bishop kindly came to visit him, and remained some days at the house. On the 21st he was anointed and received Holy Viaticum, and grew gradually worse, until, on the 26th, he passed away, to the great regret of all the inhabitants of St. Mary Church, and especially of the Catholics. Mother Rose Columba visited him during his illness, and went up to the Daison frequently after his death to console his widow. Every mark of respect and gratitude was paid to so true a friend. The Bishop sang the Requiem Mass, and the Five Absolutions were given, which are only accorded to the Lord of the Manor and the Founder of a Church. Most of the clergy of the diocese were present, all the members of the Local Board, of which he had been chairman, the leading people of Torquay and St. Mary Church, and as many as the Church would hold. He was laid to his last rest in a *loculus* opposite the entrance to the Crypt, where he had had an altar

erected for Mass, which he had himself furnished with candlesticks and crucifix, and seemed very anxious that all should be completely ready, as if he felt a presentiment that it would soon be required. The iron gates which lead to the west door of the Church were opened for the first time to admit the body of the Founder. He was buried on February the 3rd, and Mass was said in the Crypt on the 10th, and continued to be said there every Friday as long as Mrs. Chatto lived—indeed, down to the present time—by the chaplain of the Daison. *Requiescat in pace!*

In May, through the kindness of the Bishop and other benefactors, Mother Prioress and the nuns were able to have Processions in honour of Our Lady, to testify their gratitude to her for having obtained for them the entire liquidation of the debt on the Guest-House, which was opened on the Feast of St. Dominic, when the Bishop sang the Mass, and the sermon was preached by Canon Shortland; the Bishop and clergy dining afterwards in the new House.

In the previous month Bishop Ullathorne gave the Community great joy by a visit that he paid them, after being present at the opening of the new Church and Cloister of St. Gregory's Monastery at Downside. The Annals say:—

“His fatherly kindness was more than words could express. He made himself all in all to us; coming up to the Community Room every morning about ten o'clock, seeing all those who wished to speak to him privately, and giving them as much as they wished of his time and his

fatherly help, many having more than one interview with him. The afternoons and evenings he spent with us at recreation, and was so bright, and amused us by telling us many anecdotes of his younger days. The last evening of his visit was unusually bright, and he seemed as if he did not want the recreation to come to an end, giving us a quarter of an hour longer; and before going he gave us leave for an extra Communion and a recreation day. During his visit he gave us a Spiritual Conference on 'Fidelity to Little Things,' and gave us Absolution of faults. When we thanked him for his kindness, and expressed fear of his being tired, he said, 'I am only here to be of service to you, and therefore I will come to the Sisters and see them whenever they want me.' On his return home he wrote us a very kind letter, expressing his pleasure at having been with us."

Before the end of 1882 the first proposals for a Foundation at Adelaide reached St. Mary Church. The history of this Foundation demands a chapter to itself. But before entering upon that important turning-point in the career of Mother Rose Columba, it will be well for us to sum up the main features of her life at St. Mary Church under the three separate heads of her work outside the Convent, her work as Superior within the Convent, and lastly, an attempt will be made to trace the work of God in her interior life. These will form the subjects of the three next chapters.

CHAPTER V

*HER WORK AT ST. MARY CHURCH—ST. MARY CHURCH
—HER WORK AND INFLUENCE AMONG THE PEOPLE
—THE POOR—THE EDUCATED—THE CHILDREN—
ORPHANS—SCHOOLS—PARTING TESTIMONIAL.*

WE may now take a more particular view of the work of Mother Rose Columba at St. Mary Church; and it may be convenient to begin with her work outside her own Religious Community. That Community is essentially a missionary body. If their life is in the Cloister, their work lies principally outside of it. Their Constitutions lay down, in Chapter VIII.:—

“Forasmuch as idleness is the enemy of the soul, and the mother and nurse of all vices, let none of the Sisters be idle, but let this be carefully observed, that, except at those hours and times when they are engaged in prayer, in reciting the Office, or in any other necessary occupation, they all be diligently employed either in some manual work for the general good, or in study, in order to fit themselves for being useful in the schools, according as it shall be appointed them” (§ 178).

Again, as to the kind of work, it goes on to say:—

“Under the name of work are included various kinds of useful or necessary occupations. First are to be understood

those domestic and laborious offices in the Convent, from taking part in which none should be excused, such as the kitchen, the laundry, the infirmary, and the like. Secondly, the active charitable works undertaken by the Sisters, such as teaching in the schools, visiting the sick, and serving in the hospitals or other charitable institutes attached to our Convents. And thirdly, needlework or other manual work done for the common good" (§ 179).

The Sisters do not undertake nursing the sick at their own homes; but they make it their special business to visit the sick of all classes, and in the early days of St. Mary Church, Mother Rose Columba lost no opportunity of practising this work of mercy. Though she always made the welfare of the soul her first concern, yet she knew that most people are won by a kind solicitude for their bodily needs. The Community was very poor, and it was very little that the Sisters had to give in the way of alms. But they were very generous in acts and words of kindness, and in those little personal services which cost more than money in the way of self-sacrifice.

Some incidents of her visits to the poor have been already mentioned in connection with Clifton. During the first years of her life at St. Mary Church she went a great deal among the poor. The following instance shows the good that these visits effected.

In one of her visits she came across a little boy who was suffering from an eruption on the skin, and whose face was so disfigured that he was obliged to be kept at home apart from other children. His

parents were Protestants, but the mother had some Catholic tendencies. They came from Staffordshire, and were of a more independent character than the people of Devonshire, whose compliant disposition makes them much afraid of incurring the displeasure of the parson or squire. When Mother Rose Columba saw the child, she offered to bring something which might do him good. The mother readily assented, saying that many remedies had been tried, but without success. Mother Prioress had some of St. Philomena's Oil. She took some with her on her next visit, and applied it to the face and other parts affected. The mother held her child while this was being done, and was astonished that he remained so quiet; as hitherto she had experienced great difficulty in applying any liniment. Mother Rose Columba told her to repeat the application for nine days, and exhorted her to put her trust in Almighty God. Ten days afterwards she called again, and found her little patient almost cured, and only one small scar remained. The parents were overjoyed, but sorely perplexed at the wonderful efficacy of the Oil. To their inquiries, Mother Prioress only replied, "When you are Catholics, I will tell you all about it." The mother was not long before she presented herself for regular instruction, and having a very intelligent mind, she was soon sufficiently instructed to be received into the Church. Out of gratitude, she took the name of "Philomena" at her Confirmation, and had a great devotion to the virgin Saint who had

brought healing to her child, and the light of the Faith to her own soul. Her husband was not converted quite so easily. His father had been a Methodist preacher, and he himself had read a great deal, though his reading had been chiefly of infidel books. However, he was much impressed by what had happened, and determined to study diligently the Catholic religion. After some weeks of study and conversation with a priest, he put himself regularly under instruction; and as he had never been baptized, he was baptized with all the ceremonies of Adult Baptism. He and his wife were both decorators at the Terra-cotta Works.

Two girls, employed at the same works, had been received into the Church, and lived with their father, who was a turner there. Their mother had died some years before in Staffordshire. Mother Rose Columba visited the house, and spoke to the old man about his soul. His own account of it shortly before he died was as follows:—

“She came to my house, and talked to me, and asked me if I did not want to save my soul. I said I had never thought much about that; and then she asked me if I did not think it was *time* to do so, before it should be too late. And the words dropped so sweetly from her lips that it seemed to me as if it was the Blessed Virgin herself that was speaking. And I thought it *was* time for me to begin, and that’s how I became a Catholic.”

She was not always in time to bring her instructions to a successful issue. In the summer of 1875 several

cases of fever occurred in the village, and one of those stricken down was a young married man, who lay for three weeks in a burning fever, with no one to do anything for him but his young wife, who had several little children to look after. The Sisters did not hear of the case until the very day on which he died. On that morning the poor wife saw Mother Prioress pass the house, and rushed out, and told her sad tale. At once Mother Rose Columba entered the sick-room, and rendered all the assistance that was possible ; but it was too late for the poor sufferer, who was already unconscious, and whose life was ebbing away. He died the same afternoon. The poor widow's gratitude for the sympathy and kind offices of the Sisters was unbounded. She published it far and wide ; and the gentleman whose coachman the young man had been, wrote a most polite letter of thanks to the Sisters, commending that charity which did not flinch, even when the danger of contagion had scared others away. The Sisters, in recording the circumstance in their Annals, say, "We had attended several of the sick poor in the course of the year ; but this woman alone, a stranger and a Protestant, returned to the Priory to pour out her thanks."

Another incident is mentioned in the Annals of the Priory, though it is not quite clear whether Mother Rose Columba was personally an actor in the scene. A young man, the assistant in the shop of the butcher with whom the Community chiefly dealt, had often come to the Convent with the meat. The Sisters had remarked

his extremely nice and respectful manner. After his marriage, he set up on his own account ; but it proved a failure, and he removed with his wife to London, where he obtained a situation. He had been laid up with a severe cold on his chest for some weeks, when one winter's day he was sent for by his master to assist in killing a bullock which was rather violent. He went, but in the effort to slaughter the furious animal he burst a blood-vessel, and was brought home to his wife in a very critical state. As he grew weaker and weaker, he expressed a wish to return to die in his native village, which, through the kindness of a charitable lady, he was able to accomplish. His mother received him into her house ; and, though not yet confined to his bed, he was quite unable to work. He was visited several times by the ministers of the Methodist and Free Church chapels, but he did not relish their ministrations, refused to talk to them, and when they came in at the front door he would walk out at the back. A Catholic woman went to see him, and asked if he would like to see the Sisters. He said that he would, and accordingly two of them visited him once or twice. As they found that the Protestant ministers still came to the house, they told him plainly that he must make his choice of either the Catholic religion or the Protestant, and that if he preferred the Protestant ministers they would not come. He soon made up his mind in favour of the Sisters, and the ministers were asked not to call again. His instructions in the Faith then regularly commenced, and his simple, child-

like, humble spirit, soon drank in the truths of the Catholic religion with great relish. He was soon ready to make his Confession, and be received into the Church, after which he made his first Communion with the most edifying dispositions. He lingered for some weeks, and looked forward to the daily visit of the Sisters with the greatest interest, and his face always lighted up with joy when they entered his room. He told his wife that he did not know what the angels were like, but if there were any on earth they were the Sisters. As his end approached, he himself asked for the Sacrament of Extreme Unction, and the priest was with him when he died. His wife was received into the Church before his death. He was the first Catholic buried in the old Churchyard, by a priest with Catholic rites, since the Reformation. The quiet and respectful behaviour of the people as the little procession, headed by the Cross-bearer, passed from the Catholic Church through the street to the Churchyard, showed what a vast change had taken place in the feelings of the people, who, ten years before, had hooted and stoned the Sisters in the street.

The poor are not the only people who stand in need of sympathy and kindness. Many who have every comfort and even luxury in their surroundings are more desolate than the poorest of the poor. Isolated by the artificial barriers of rank or fashion, they cannot be approached by those who can give them true sympathy and consolation, and they often pine in vain for a kind word, which no one presumes to give them. It is one

of the privileges of those who have consecrated themselves to God in religion, that they meet all classes of people on equal terms, "as poor, yet making many rich ; as having nothing, and yet possessing all things." It is less easy to give examples of charity to the rich than to the poor, because the persons are more easily identified, and their feelings are more likely to be wounded. Yet some have not been ashamed to confess the obligations that they owe to Mother Rose Columba. One, who afterwards became a Religious, writes :—

"You know she was the very first person I ever could call a '*friend*.' I saw her for the first time, I may say (though she did once pass me in my life before), in the Schoolroom at Torquay, at a Christmas feast, and I never shall forget the effect of her kind, sweet expression as she turned and looked at me with a smile. The feeling darted across me, 'I could say anything to her ; I must go and see her at the Convent.' Until that time I had only had superiors at school who thought harshness the way to educate children ! I had never talked heart to heart with any one. From that day *all was changed*."

"I don't know *how* it was, but she used to remind me of our Blessed Lord Himself, even in her outward gait and actions. I remember once, as we came along 'mud lane'¹ from the Choir, some of the orphans were making a noise in the presbytery passage. She went down the part at the back of the Chapter Room, at right angles with the rioters' part, and then merely lifted up her hand in her grave, dignified way. The effect was instantaneous. To my imagination, as I watched her, the scene of our Lord quelling the storm on the waters came so vividly that until

¹ See above, p. 61.

this day I often think of it. I seemed to hear His words to the noisy waters, 'Peace, be still!' Why should it have been so? Except that her existence was always spent in leading souls past herself to God. She *did* attract them certainly, but she never *kept* them for *herself*."

Another, who also became a Religious, writes :—

" *You* know, and every one else would say the same, that something nameless attracted one to her, and made you love her; and that her one object was to make you love God more, and have great confidence in Him. She often put in her letters, 'Sursum corda,' as well as saying it when she talked to one. She certainly had great penetration. Even one of the poor people here said to me the other day, 'She seemed to see right through you, Sister, and know you better than you knew yourself.' I never saw her hurried or put out; and when I stayed here as a secular, she would let me talk to her for an hour or more, as if she had nothing to do but attend to my little troubles and difficulties; and she would always answer letters, especially if she thought I was *down* or in any difficulty, as soon as possible."

Another lady, who lived in the Guest-House for some years, and is now a Carmelite nun, says :—

"One thing struck me always so much in her—how she was all things to all people in order to win a soul. I mean, she would talk for an hour with Colonel Clifton¹ about his friends and interests, in order to gain her end, which was to get him to go to his duties while his yacht was at Torquay; and she was quite as ready to discuss farming, or gardening,

¹ Old Colonel Clifton of Lytham was well known in Lancashire. He used never to miss coming up to the Priory to see Mother Rose Columba when his steam yacht, *The Taurus*, was in the bay.

or washing with some poor person for another hour, in order to be able to get them to listen to her, or read some book to please her, which was destined to convert them. Once, I remember, when she paid me a little visit in my room, I asked her, as I often did, to say something to help me to please God more; she said, 'Well, if I were somebody, I would not think about this and this.' And she mentioned thoughts I told to no one, but which were troubling me. I remember getting very red, and I said, 'Mother, how could you have known?' She only laughed, and making a little cross on my forehead, went out of the room.

"Once, when in the parlour with a lady and gentleman, she was stung by a wasp in her sleeve. She never moved, but let it remain, saying afterwards, 'It would have been contrary to religious modesty to have made any fuss about it.'

"I loved her very dearly, as you know; and well I might, considering how much I owed her. But I always had a scruple about keeping her long; and it was generally about the poor people, or about work, or about self that we spoke."

Another lady, who spent several months at the Convent, and who is now the mother of a family, gives her reminiscences in these words:—

"I shall never forget nor cease to cherish my first impressions of Mother Rose Columba. Having recently undergone a great deal of trouble and sorrow, I felt quite overcome, upon my arrival at the Convent, by her sympathetic and cordial reception. She received me with a smile of welcome, expressing a gentleness and tenderness which at once attracted me and won my confidence. An indescribable expression of goodness and depth of feeling shone in her bright and speaking eyes, making one feel that the Spirit of God was within her. Her greatest happiness

seemed to be in consoling sorrow, or in striving to make God more known and more loved. During her first conversation with me she quoted from the words of St. Rose of Lima the following passage, which I have always remembered: 'Would you win heaven? Then you must be generous; toil hard and suffer much, for the reward which God has prepared is itself exceedingly great!' She would often say, too, 'How blessed it is to be allowed to suffer something for His sake! It is a special grace, and something to rejoice over in humility.'

"Mother Rose Columba seemed to live in the presence of our Lord, and to converse about or with Him as a child would of or with its father. Her burning wish was ever to increase the glory and to defend the rights of the Church, her whole life seeming to be a preparation for Communion—uniting herself ever more closely to Him, and forming herself after the model of His love and humility."

It was strange to see what totally different kinds of people were equally attracted to her, and how sometimes strong-minded women who ruled their own families with the power of an inflexible will would sit at her feet and ask for and act upon her advice with the most childlike docility. The devotion of some of her friends was sometimes extravagant, and now and then inconvenient to the Community; and occasionally, but not often, would be succeeded by a fit of violent antipathy which seldom lasted long. One strange thing about her friendships was, that love for her very seldom produced jealousy. Those who were attached to her seemed to wish that others might share her friendship, and derive the same benefit from it that they experienced themselves. One lady, to whom

she had been a very great spiritual help and comfort, said of her, in her quaint way, in her private note-book, "It's a great comfort not to be left to women. They don't do me much good—women don't; and I don't believe in them very much, except Mother Prioress. I *do* believe in my Dove (Columba). But then she's not exactly a woman, but a nun." Though so firm in her will, she was thoroughly feminine; no one would have thought of calling her a masculine character. The present writer used frequently to be reminded of that great Dominican Saint, St. Catherine of Sienna, in the wonderful power that she had both over men and women of all classes and of all ages. No doubt it was owing, in a great measure, to that natural power of sympathy which enabled her to go straight to the heart, but it was still more owing to that intense personal love for our Lord, which was the ruling spring of her life. Her heart was so large that every one seemed to find a place there; and when once that place was given, it was given for ever. She never forgot her friends.

The friend of her youth who supplied so much of the first pages of this Memoir, describes their meeting after many years of separation. She had come to live in Torquay, and even in the St. Mary Church Road, but it was a long time before either she or Mother Rose Columba knew that they were within half a mile of each other. When the latter found it out, says her friend—

"She wrote and fixed a day for me 'to come and see if I could find any trace of the Sophy of old.' She was mis-

chievous enough to meet me in a sort of darkened passage-room in the old house, with two other nuns. I looked from one to the other—dress and all was changed. But in a moment her eyes beamed, and her arms were round my neck.

“Sophy was one of the most beautiful characters I ever met with. I can never forget my very last parting with her. She looked white as marble, and years younger than she usually did. On entering the room she said, ‘I can only give you five minutes.’ We hardly spoke. She seemed to me to have earned the blessing in all the Beatitudes. I said, ‘Sophy, how do you feel?’ She answered, ‘I don’t feel at all; as I move, I don’t seem to touch the ground. I feel as though floating through space.’ It seemed to me as though only the ‘wings of the dove’ were wanting. I will not write more: it brings back the past so vividly.”

This friend, who kindly supplied so many interesting details of the early life of Mother Rose Columba, and who afterwards read the first chapter of this Memoir, which she was pleased to say was “a clear and truthful account of her,” has passed away not very long after writing the words quoted above.

When the Community at St. Mary Church increased, there was very much more for the Prioress to do at home, and she was obliged to give up much of her visiting. But there were many objects of her care under the same roof, though external to the Community; these were the ladies in the Guest-House, a few young ladies who formed a school, and then the orphans. The Young Ladies’ School may be said to have begun in 1868, when a little deaf and dumb girl, the daughter of an Anglican clergyman, was placed by her parents

under the care of the Sisters. When first she came she was only three and a half years old, and her parents being a great deal abroad, the child had been left very much to servants. The parents seemed to feel great confidence in leaving her in charge of the Sisters, and left them perfectly unfettered as to what teaching they should give her. The father's idea was that she should be left with them for six years, though she only stayed four. She had evidently been much left to herself, and was subject to violent fits of temper, was very wayward, and seemed suspicious of everybody. Mother Rose Columba's heart felt great compassion for the little thing; and in the sunshine of her love, by degrees the suspicious expression disappeared, the fits of passion came less frequently and lasted for a shorter time, and the mind seemed to awake and showed great aptitude for imbibing knowledge. Before twelve months had elapsed she could hardly be recognised as the same child. She became perfectly docile, and instead of being a source of anxiety and trouble, she became an object of interest and affection to all the Community. As she had no companions except the nuns, and one of the elder girls who acted as her nurse, she followed the Sisters about everywhere, and ran all over the Convent, which was then in the old Villa. She soon learned to converse on her fingers, and even to articulate words. She was very conscientious, and had a great devotion to the Blessed Sacrament. When she was about seven years old her parents came to see her, and were much pleased at the progress she had made.

But when they found how much she had imbibed of Catholic doctrine and practice, they seemed to take alarm, and soon afterwards removed her from the Convent. Some years elapsed, and then they allowed her to come and stay two or three weeks at the Priory, and she had evidently lost none of her affection for the Sisters. On hearing of Mother Rose Columba's death, she wrote :—

“I wish I could tell you all my childish recollections ; but it would take pages to write them out. I often think of the old house, and verandah, your study, your bookshelves, and the silver biscuit-box on the round table ; the schoolroom upstairs, overlooking the orchard, where I had lessons with Sister F. P. I well remember the Christmas festivities at the Orphanage, and how I used to love to watch the Sisters decorating the Church. Once, at one of these treats, a little orphan broke by accident my angel statue which was given to me off the tree. I fell into a rage, and ran up to complain. Mother Prioress was near, and looked so sadly at me, that I felt ashamed, and quickly forgave the child. Sometimes I was very naughty, and my nurse (Teresa, now dead) could not manage me ; but, directly Mother Prioress appeared, I became a different child. How beloved her face was in life ! and how regretted now !”

It has been remarked in a previous chapter that she had no natural attraction for children, yet her care for the little ones in the Orphanage would have made one imagine that children were her special favourites. Sometimes children came from dirty homes, with skin diseases, disfiguring them, and their hair full of vermin. With her own hands the Prioress would attend to these

little victims of neglect, and set all her Sisters an example of the spirit of sacrifice in which they should perform the most humiliating offices of charity. But her real care was lavished rather upon their souls than their bodies. To form good principles in their young hearts was her first concern. It was wonderful to see the change that would come over those who had been taken from a workhouse after a few months at the Orphanage. The hard lines of obstinacy and the suspicious expression of distrust gradually melted out of the little faces, and they soon recovered the happy and frank freedom of children in a well-ordered home, growing up under the loving eye of a mother. And when they grew older, each one became an object of special solicitude. She studied their individual characters, and tenderly fostered any good aspirations that she saw in them, while she endeavoured to root out, with unsparing zeal, those incipient growths of vice, which she knew would become a serious danger in after-life. Although she never needlessly interfered with the Sister who was the Mistress of the Orphanage, and left her great freedom in carrying out her own ideas, yet she was always ready to support her authority and advise her in difficulties ; and there was not a child in the Orphanage but knew that she could go freely to Mother Prioress, and ask help and advice in any perplexity, or in any instance where she might feel that she had not been properly understood.

In return for this motherly care she expected from the children a corresponding sense of filial affection

and gratitude. In this she was very often disappointed. It is not until young people have passed from under the control of parents and those who stand *in loco parentis*, that they reflect upon how much they owe to those who have watched over them in the days of childhood. Sometimes it has been remarked that those who have been taken out of the most wretched surroundings are often the most exacting and discontented. It is so with servants. Those who have been half-starved at home will be the most dainty and fastidious about their food, and the work that they have to do, when they find themselves in a comfortable situation. Mother Rose Columba never could quite understand this. Herself generous to a fault, and overflowing with gratitude to any one who had done her the least kindness, she could not comprehend the state of mind of those who receive kindness and seem to have no desire to return it. She took to heart any ingratitude shown by the children, especially the elder ones, so seriously that it sometimes brought on a severe attack of illness.

In the year 1878 three of the elder girls took it into their heads to run away. It was a bright day in May, and off they started, and walked to the station at Newton Abbot, and thence took the train to Dawlish. Great was the consternation at the Convent when their disappearance was found out. The priest was away, but Dr. Northcote was on a visit, and most kindly went off the next morning to Exeter, whither it was supposed they had gone, as a Catholic lady had seen them on the

platform at Newton. Nothing could be heard of them in Exeter, and the whole day was spent in fruitless search for them. At last the culprits were found by a policeman, looking very miserable, not far from the Priory. The poor girls were thoroughly ashamed of being brought in by the police, but for two or three days did not seem at all to understand the gravity of their offence. They had intended to have gone to London, but found their money would not carry them further than Dawlish. After amusing themselves there, they walked to Teignmouth, and were on their way back by the road along the cliff to St. Mary Church, when they passed a house where a girl lived who had been in the Orphanage for a year or two. She saw them, and gave them some tea, and as it was late her father asked them to stop there for the night. The next day, as they were slowly making their way home, they fell into the hands of the police. After a while they all became very contrite, and earnestly begged to be forgiven. The fault was, however, too grave to be passed over, and two of the children were sent away. They turned out extremely well afterwards, and ever retained a warm affection for the Orphanage and for Mother Prioress. The other girl had no home, and entreated so earnestly not to be sent to the workhouse that she was permitted to stay. The event made a great impression on the other girls, and some of the elder ones wrote a letter to Mother Prioress, expressing their sorrow that she should have experienced this pain at the hands of her own children. Her reply has been

preserved, and it shows the principles that she strove to inculcate upon them :—

“MY VERY DEAR CHILDREN,—Your loving letter was the greatest comfort to me, after this week of sorrow and anxiety, and I thank you most gratefully for it and for your offer of prayers.

“It has been a great disappointment to me that —— and —— could have acted as they have done. It was not only foolish, but ungrateful. They owe very much to the Convent ; and as they were *trusted* they ought to report . . . instead of listening to it and being guided by it. —— had fewer advantages, and she was not placed in the same position (of trust). Where there is *trust*, greater fidelity is expected. And where much has been given, some gratitude at least is looked for. You must not think, if I speak of gratitude, that I mean only thanks. Gratitude is a virtue. It may be compared to a beautiful flower springing from the root of humility. Pride and ingratitude go together. A proud soul is always ungrateful both to God and man. Some persons think it grand to be proud ; and they forget that the old enemy is the father of pride. It comes from him. God loves humble souls. It was the humility of Our Blessed Lady that made her so dear to God.

“Pray, my dear children, that you may be meek and humble of heart, and then you will be grateful, happy, and contented.

“You may not and cannot have many of the so-called *pleasures* of the world ; but you may have and ought to have the peace which the world cannot have and cannot give.

“You must remember that our dearest Lord, the eternal Wisdom, when He came on earth, chose a poor Mother, and led the life of a poor man. He loved to be *poor* ; and now, also, He loves the poor. I have often told you that

poverty is no disgrace. Pride is the disgrace. It often happens that those who have many disadvantages try to hide them by pride. Pride does not hide them; it only makes them to be seen the more, and makes those who have it odious in the sight of God and men.

"God bless you, my very dear children! And may He give you humble and grateful hearts, and then you will be truly happy, here and hereafter.—Ever your affectionate friend in Jesus,

M. R. C."

Another letter addressed to the children at the Orphanage is of a more general character:—

"November 25, 1881.

"MY VERY DEAR CHILDREN,—You ask me for a letter instead of a talk on Sunday evening; so I am writing to you. The letter will begin, as the talk often does, by asking you if you are very good children? As you so lately renewed your baptismal vows (on November 21), and promised our Lord that you would not have anything to do with His enemy the devil, I shall hope to hear that you have kept this promise. You know, or rather you never can know, how much our dearest Lord loves little children. His love for you is far greater than you can understand—as we said last Sunday—He loved you so much that He came on earth to be a little child, to suffer and to die, that He might one day have you all with Him in Heaven.

"All that He asks you in return is to love Him; for if you really love Him you will do all that you can to please Him.

"When you get up in the morning, say, My work to-day is to please our Lord; so I will do all I can, and do it well, to please Him. And as we cannot do any good without His help, we must ask Our Blessed Lady to get us all the help we want. How happy you will be, when evening

comes, to remember you have tried all day, or at least some great part of the day, to please the Sacred Heart.

“If you think how many there are who do not know our Lord, and how many there are who ought to know Him, but do not think of Him, and that He looks to you to make Him some reparation, would you not do your best to comfort Him? Now you can comfort Him by being good children *for His sake*; by praying for the holy souls in Purgatory, trying to gain indulgences for them, offering your work and study for them; doing little acts of charity and kindness to others with the intention of helping them; praying for the conversion of sinners, and in many other ways. Then, when the *evening* of life comes, you will see, not only what a reward is laid up for you, but that you have had the great happiness of pleasing our Lord. Will not this be enough to make you happy for all eternity?

“May God bless you, my very dear children! Be true Children of Mary, and she will be a Mother to you. I shall hope to see you next Sunday, and to hear a very good report of you from Sister J. M. I am sure you will try to prepare well during Advent for the Coming of the Infant Jesus.—Your very affectionate friend in Him,

“S. M. ROSE COLUMBA.”

These lessons were not always thrown away. They sank deep into many of those young hearts, and were remembered for years afterwards. One of the girls, to whom the letter on Gratitude was written, writes, seven years afterwards, from Melbourne, whither she and her sister had gone to join some relatives:—

“We do hope all the dear nuns are quite well. How is dear Sister M. S. (Mistress of the Orphanage)? We have treated her so badly by not writing to her; but I intend to write to her by the next mail that goes out. It does seem

ungrateful of us in not writing to her, after all her years of care over us. But, Father, we are not ungrateful. All our thoughts and conversation are constantly in the Convent, about our school days. We are also writing to dear Mother Prioress. . . . We are glad to be able to tell you that we do try our best to be good and keep to our duties ; for we have found out, since we came out here, that we had no friend to go to but God ; for even our mother turned against us because we were Catholics."

It would be easy to multiply testimonies of this kind from the letters of those who have left the Orphanage.

Mother Rose Columba was very particular about the children being well instructed in reading and writing ; and, in accordance with the Constitutions of the Congregation, herself examined them periodically. One of the children, who afterwards married a university man, when asked how she managed to get on among people of a very different position in society to what she had been accustomed, said : " Well, you see, the nuns had taught me to speak correctly, so I did not make any mistakes in conversation. And when I found people talking upon subjects that I did not understand, I held my tongue, and afterwards got a book from the library and read up the subject." But the point most insisted upon was needlework. If the girls brought up in the Orphanage could do nothing else, they could always sew neatly and well.

With all her desire for the efficient training of the children, Mother Rose Columba had imbibed all Mother Margaret's dislike of Government inspection of the Schools. In 1870 Mr. Edwin Arnold paid a visit to

the School, and examined the day scholars, who passed well, on the whole. He refused to examine the orphans, as belonging to a private establishment.

In 1877 the Congregation decided to qualify for Government certificates, and as soon as possible their Schools at Stone and at Stoke were placed on "The Annual Grant List," and received grants from the Privy Council. The present writer, as Pastor of the Mission, though he respected the feelings of Mother Rose Columba on the subject, felt that sooner or later the Day School would have to be under Government inspection, and thought it was better for the change to take place at the request of the managers of the School rather than have it forced upon us from without. He also thought that Mother Rose Columba's strong antipathy to the system would be the best safeguard against the evils so forcibly pointed out in a letter of Mother Margaret on the subject. He accordingly broached the subject in writing to Mother Imelda; but she explained that it was then impossible to supply St. Mary Church with a certificated Sister; and, besides, knowing Mother Prioress's views on the point, she wished, as long as possible, to spare her the pain of adopting it. Mother Rose Columba's objections will best be gathered from the following letters:—

"March 11, 1878.

"REV. AND DEAR FATHER,—I have thought much on what you proposed this morning; and though, at the moment you spoke, it seemed as if repeating your words would not be the same as if *I* suggested the act, yet in

reality there would be little difference. I *promised* our Mother never to assist the Government system by any free act of my own; and my greatest desire is to keep this School untainted. If I am told it is to be put under Government, I shall, of course, make no opposition. Did I open the subject, it would perhaps be the more generous act, but for the promise to our late dear Mother, and my own intense dislike to the system, as it seems to me, *on principle*."

"March 12, 1878.

"You will think I am very dense when I say I do not see why there is any need for the Parish Priest to take the initiative. If the Parish School needed reform, then most decidedly ought the Parish Priest to see it is reformed. But it does not. It was found equal to, and even above, what was required by Government. My general rubric is 'Leave *well* alone.' . . . All that I can foresee would be endless disagreeables, and £ s. d. would be sure to come in, and all the &c., &c. When inconvenient to give a 'Certified Mistress' belonging to the Community, the School might be thrown on the Parish. Item: I should not like to think *you* had anything to do with bringing about all this state of things. . . . My one desire is to keep the School free. If discords—for I can call it by no other word—began here, I should send in my resignation; for I could not live in such an atmosphere, nor believe it was A.M.D.G.

S. M. R. C."

As reference has been made to Mother Margaret's views on Government Schools, it may be well to quote here one of her letters on the subject:—

"MY VERY DEAR CHILD,—I can hardly put into words my very great dislike to have anything to do with governments, or committees, or anything where there are a great

many opinions and a multiplicity of voices and speeches. I say again, I do not know how to answer what you ask, for my instincts are so vivid and strong on these points, that I see more than I can say or write. The evil is before me like a large plain picture, and I seem to see all the evils that would come from this over-educating of those whom God has placed in humbler life, put aside the want of a pure intention in the Government, which could never mean any good to the Catholic Church. One of the greatest evils is that of making young, innocent, interesting girls, who would be farm-servants or servants of some class or other, too refined so that they are ashamed of the conversation of their poor parents, aim to be equal to those whom God has taught us to be subject to, and thus become easily the dupes of bad designing men, who are unfaithful to their wives, to virtue, and to God.

“Another evil is that these young women get such a love for reading and other refined tastes, that they are not fit to be the wife of a poor tradesman or labourer; for, with their heads full of all that has been taught in the schools of our day, they are not content to sit at home and mend, and make, and wash, and iron, as their duty is: the poor man in these days has not a happy cottage or fireside to go to; so his only resource is the public-house; and we know where all that ends. Much, very much more could I say on this; but I thank God I have lived to see the state of things changed. Had it gone on for years longer, we should have had no servants, no farmers’ daughters that would work, and no poor men’s wives, and not one Christian mother; for that which fosters pride destroys Christianity, modesty, and humility, and these truly domestic virtues are the blessing and comforts of a poor man’s home.

“Do not think from this that I would like our own humbler classes to be less educated than others. No;

I would like them to be superior to other poor in every way and everything, as they are in reality superior to them by the blessing of faith and the teaching of the one true and only Catholic Church ; but let all and each be content to qualify themselves for the state God has placed or will place them in. The Government did one good thing—it made us look about us and improve the education of our schools.

“When first I heard of the Government proposal for our poor-schools, one of the things that struck me was, it was a deep-laid scheme to destroy, in time, all religious teaching. For, though it was *said* all was to be done by our Religious, yet the end was to get secular girls taught so as to supersede all our Religious teaching. But the greatest of all evils was the Religious themselves being so taken with it, although it must and would destroy the whole foundation of a religious, interior, spiritual life. It was a deep-laid snare of the devil, at the time when our dear Lord was renewing the religious life, and calling so many generous women to serve Him. He laid the bait well, for nearly all were caught by it, and your poor ignorant Mother was considered, what she really was, quite unfit for the times and for the progress of education.

“My dear Sisters, it is for you I say these things. We leave the world to be God’s servants, not the servants of any government, or man, or woman, but God’s free agents. I have had letters from some of these good Religious who were entrapped before they knew. They told me they could not meditate, or say a *Pater* or *Ave* without parsing it ; and two or three have told me their hair on their heads stood on end when they expected the inspector, and that sleep fled their eyes for weeks before an examination. Could this be the work or call of God? No, my dear children ; it would destroy the whole features of a religious life.

“These are some of the things that I foresaw ; and the

fearful effects it would and did cause by one outvying the others to appear more learned, more acute, more esteemed, by these inspectors, and to have the name published of this or that nun—this is not to what God calls us when He gives us the precious grace of a vocation to a religious life. God and all this secular learning, which does not help the soul in any way, cannot go together. You have seen two fearful marks of the overworking of the brain, and how many more are there that we have not seen? Be faithful to God, to your holy state, and ever avoid Government Committees, or anything secular, as much as you can. The world never had, nor ever will have, the interests of God at heart; so all it does with this cover, suspect and avoid—but God, and God only, be your one, your only aim.”¹

It must be remembered that Mother Margaret died before the Education Act of 1870 came into operation; and it may be doubted whether she would have adhered to her resolution to have nothing to do with Government Committees when the alternative was put to her Community, of either qualifying themselves for Government certificates, or giving up the work of teaching the elementary schools altogether. The education crisis has not yet come to a final settlement either in this country or in America. Our ecclesiastical authorities have thought it advisable to take every advantage open to us of the aid offered by the State in rendering our schools and teaching more efficient. But it is always possible that they may find that they can no longer stem the tide of secularisation, and to save the imperilled

¹ “Life,” pp. 206–209.

faith of our children, may have to sacrifice all these advantages. Still, whatever happens, the earnest warnings of Mother Margaret can never be out of place, and are all the more necessary for those whose duty requires them to encounter the dangers which she points out so forcibly.

In reading over what has been said above, the writer is painfully conscious that he has given a very meagre description of the power and influence that Mother Rose Columba exercised at St. Mary Church. It seemed to him, when she was there, that he was much in the position of the priests appointed to attend upon St. Catherine to hear the Confessions of those whom she converted. Whatever converts were made—and some two hundred were received into the Church during her stay there—were mostly of her making. There were hardly any in whose conversion she had not a hand. But it was not so much what she *did* as what she *was*, the living, breathing embodiment of all that she professed and taught. When the time of her departure came, there was not an individual who did not feel it to be a personal loss which could not be replaced. The people wished to testify their appreciation of what she had done for them by presenting her with a purse of over £100, and the following address was read by Canon Brownlow:—

REVEREND MOTHER,—It is a duty that devolves upon me, as the Pastor of this Mission, to present you this purse of a hundred guineas, which a large body of your friends have contributed, as some token of their affection, and

their gratitude for what you have done for all classes of people during these seventeen years that you have lived and laboured in St. Mary Church. So many years could not have passed without many trials, disappointments, and discouragements of every kind. Death has been very busy amongst us, and your own health has often broken down. Still your faith and courage have never failed. And when you compare this magnificent pile of buildings, and the beautiful Church, and its congregation of some three hundred Catholics, with the small Villa, which served for Convent, Church, and Presbytery, all in one, when first you came amongst us, you have great cause to thank God that you have not laboured in vain.

"It is very painful for us to bid you farewell; but we know that our Lord has called you to work in a far-distant colony, and we hope that our little offering may be of some use to you at the commencement of your labours in Adelaide. We are confident that you and your devoted companions will not forget us in your prayers. We, on our part, shall earnestly pray that God may grant you many years of health and strength to labour for Him, until you see even more consoling fruits of your toil than have been given you here. Every name in this list of contributors has its own tale to tell of gratitude and love, which will follow you across the ocean to your new home."

CHAPTER VI

LIFE AS RELIGIOUS SUPERIOR

Duties of a Superior—Sympathy—Reverence—Conferences at Chapter—The Mandatum—Purity of Intention—Poverty—Presence of God—Time—Death—Obedience—Religious Manner—Weariness—Letters to Religious—Recreation—Dangers of Attractiveness.

WE have seen something of the life of the subject of this Memoir as a simple Religious ; but we must now endeavour to gather some idea of what her life was as a Superior of a Convent. By the Constitutions, a Prioress is appointed by the Prioress Provincial and her Council for three years, at the end of which period she may be reappointed for a similar term. After this also has expired, she cannot be reappointed except with the special dispensation of the General. And yet it happened that Mother Rose Columba remained Superior of the same Convent for sixteen years successively. She was appointed Vicaress in 1867, and reappointed in 1870. In 1871 she was appointed Prioress ; and in 1874, at the Provincial Chapter, she was again elected for the second term of three years. In the ordinary course of things her office would have come to an end in 1877 ; but it so happened that in that year the Constitutions were finally approved by the Holy See, and it was decided that everything should

begin *de novo* from that date. She was consequently elected for three years, and again in 1880 for three years more. Doubtless there were grave reasons that induced the Mother Provincial and her Council to keep one Superior in practically the same office for sixteen years, contrary to the general spirit of the Congregation. It may be surmised, without much rashness, that one of these was the complete cordiality and confidence that existed between Mother Rose Columba and the Chatto family. It was very desirable that Mr. Chatto's generous desire to complete the Church should be accomplished, and this might have been delayed indefinitely if any misunderstanding had arisen between Mr. Chatto and the Convent. Not only was her term of office prolonged far beyond the time contemplated by the Constitutions, but the delicate state of Mother Rose Columba's health was such as to make her continuance in office a matter of serious question. The Constitutions lay down:—

“No one can be elected Prioress who is not able to follow Community life in the Choir, the Refectory, and other exercises, and to sleep in the common Dormitory; and if any Prioress should fall into so weak a state of health as to be almost continually prevented from following Community life and attending in Choir, and there seem no hope of her recovering her health and strength within the space of six months, she is bound to resign, and if she should fail to do so she ought to be absolved from her office by the Prioress Provincial” (§ 653).

The attacks of illness to which Mother Rose Columba was subject, though severe and often dangerous, yet

generally did not last long, and she had such a marvellous power of recuperation that there was always a hope of her recovery. And then her qualifications for Superiority were so exceptional that she could govern her Community when another would have been completely unable to attend to anything beyond her own ailments. Mother Imelda more than once told the present writer, "We have no more efficient Superior in the Order." The Constitutions lay down the qualifications of the Prioress :—

"She should, above all, practise humility. She must be assiduous in prayer, punctual in Choir, and at all other Community exercises, exact in all that belongs to the observance of the Rule and Constitutions ; in a word, she must render herself fit to be in all things a guide and an example to her Community."

This part of her life may be postponed to the next chapter, but the Constitutions go on :—

"She should animate her Sisters with fervour and sweetness to the practice of virtue, and strive with all her power to maintain peace and fraternal charity in the House, yielding sometimes to the counsel and the wishes of others. She ought not herself personally to discharge any of the offices, and she should neither trouble the officials in the exercise of their charge herself, nor allow others to disturb them. She must be patient towards all, and receive all who wish to speak to her with sweetness, at any time whatsoever, except during the time of deep silence, but then only in case of great necessity" (§ 656).

To show how Mother Rose Columba acquitted herself of these duties, it will be necessary to give examples

of her teaching, and to quote the testimony of those who were at various times her subjects. The following letter shows the sympathy she felt for a young lady leaving a home, where she was very tenderly loved, to enter a Convent:—

“ *March 15, 1870.*

“MY VERY DEAR X.,—I know quite well what you are feeling to-day. Nature moaning a little, and grace rejoicing at the near accomplishment of its most ardent desires. The farewells, so often thought of, are come at last, and everything seems so different from what you thought it would be. I was reading that part of our dearest Mother's Life where it speaks of her interior, and the few short sentences which the Bishop gives as the key-notes of her life. I intended to have printed them out for you. They are, ‘GOD ALONE,’ ‘There is nothing like Prayer,’ and ‘If you love God, you must love souls.’ How often will you want all these before this time next year! You may be sure we shall often think of you and pray for you. With fondest love, ever your devoted Sister in Christ,

“ M. ROSE COLUMBA.”

The young lady to whom this was written said afterwards, “I never should have gone through the Novitiate, but for her teaching during that precious year of my first acquaintance with her in the dear old Villa.”

Some years afterwards she returned to St. Mary Church as a professed Religious. The external aspect of things had greatly changed, the Church and a great part of the Convent had been built. Yet she says, “The very atmosphere of the House when I returned seemed impregnated with holy poverty, love of the Cross, simplicity, and joyful cheerfulness, reminding me

still, after years of absence, of the first years of *real* poverty, when there sometimes was not a sixpence in the house, and *I* had to be asked to provide one."

A Sister who came to St. Mary Church before Mother Rose Columba, says:—

"Mother Rose Columba, even in the early years of her Superiority at St. Mary Church, was suffering from a chronic malady, which would have made most people thorough invalids. She had, however, a marvellous power of rising above all bodily ailments when anything had to be done, and on special occasions would bear fatigue and get through work which would have exhausted a strong person. At the time of the opening of the Church at St. Mary Church she was so unwell that we were afraid she would be unable to superintend the preparations, which required all the experience as a sacristan that she so thoroughly possessed. 'Never you fear,' she said; 'what's got to be done I shall be able to do.' And it always was so even to the end."

In fact, her own weakness and sufferings only gave additional force to her exhortations to patience and courage in bearing the Cross, for all saw that she was constantly practising the lessons that she taught to others.

Sister Mary Aquinas Harting, who was assigned to St. Mary Church soon after her Profession, wrote from her sick-chamber more than twenty years afterwards:—

"In attempting to write my recollections of dear Mother Rose Columba, I find greater difficulty than I had at first anticipated. There are so few incidents to relate, so few illustrations by which to make known that power of attracting others, which I myself felt so strongly, and which I

always attributed to her intense love of God. She always tried to make us do the most perfect thing, and did not hesitate to reprove us when she saw a want of purity of intention.

“REVERENCE.

“It might be said that she had taken for her motto the words, ‘I have loved, O Lord, the beauty of Thy house.’ Nothing in her eyes was too good for the decoration of the Altar or for the services of the Church. On the eve of great feasts she would spend the whole day in arranging the flower-vases for the Altar, and weaving the wreaths for the throne and tabernacle; she had exquisite taste, and the flowers seemed to obey her and take their places quite naturally. She was most particular in not allowing any unnecessary work in the Sanctuary, and once reproved a Sister for carrying a little hand-basin of water that way in passing from one sacristy to the other, instead of sending it through the slide.

“One morning Mass had been late, and I had to sweep the Dormitory before going to School at nine o’clock. As the crucifix was high, it was rather difficult to cover before beginning to sweep. Speaking of it afterwards, I said, ‘I thought I never should have got the crucifix covered. It did delay me so, and I was so late.’ Mother Rose Columba heard what I said, and later in the day she took me to task, as if she felt that the care of holy things should come before all else. Her reverence for priests was great; and once, having heard me make a disrespectful remark, she reminded me of those words of the Psalm, quoted by our Holy Mother St. Catherine, ‘Touch not My anointed.’

“To a Sister who was appointed Sacristan she said, ‘You have a holy office. Try to do all quietly, and think of the way in which Our Lady waited on the same Jesus. You have Him as truly present as He was in the house of Nazareth.’”

our affections fixed on God, on creatures, on ourselves? We have a consolation in our Lord's words, 'You are clean, but not all.' Yet we know what they were—how weak at the time of the Passion! Yet they had good wills, and felt ready to follow Him to prison and to death. We may hope that He will say the same of us, weak though we be, since our wills are good. During Lent we must ask our Lord to wash our feet."

Many of the Sisters have spoken of the remarkable way in which Mother Rose Columba performed the *Mandatum* on Holy Thursday. Once or twice she was too unwell to do it, and great was the regret among the Community. One of the Sisters writes, "She never seemed more to resemble our Lord than at the *Mandatum*. Her whole being was then wrapt in her imitation of His action, in adoring love of Him, and motherly love and tenderness for *His spouses*."

Sister Mary Aquinas continues her reminiscences under the head of

"PURITY OF INTENTION.

"She was never tired of impressing this upon us. I remember helping her to make a velvet canopy, used in processions of the Blessed Sacrament, and how she offered every stitch as an act of adoration and of reparation to our Divine Lord. She had a special devotion to the Blessed Sacrament, and every night, on leaving the Choir, she would kiss her ring and renew her vows at the same time, a practice which she taught me to adopt. One day she watched me making a bed, and noticing that I put the marks on the bed-clothes either to the head or foot just as they happened to come to hand, she said, 'Is that the way you make a bed? The J. M. D. C. should never be down at

the feet, out of respect.' Although it is more than twenty years since she taught me this, I have never forgotten it, but think of her words every time I have the same work to do. Everything she undertook was always perfectly done. Her illuminations were beautiful proofs of her purity of intention ; all that was given to our Lord was the very best. The following prayer she wrote out for me ; I believe it to be her own composition : 'I choose Thee, my sweetest Jesus, as my Sovereign Love, and to Thy Love do I sacrifice all human love, all affection for creatures, and all love of self. I will be kind to all, think well of all, and pray for all, but my heart shall be all Thine. Never, with the help of Thy grace, shall it seek its rest or its consolation in created objects. Whatever state I am in, make me always present myself before Thee in the Sacrament of Thy Love, even though I feel that I am defiled with sin. Thou art there as my Redeemer, as my most tender and most loving Father, and my comforter. Thou art my light, my joy, my Spouse, my All.' She used to say, 'No shadows so darken the soul and separate it from God as human shadows.' Though not having much voice herself, she would see that all the music required for the Divine Office and Mass (which in those days was always sung in Choir) was carefully learnt, and sufficient copies made, not only to supply the Sisters, but also the children who were allowed to come into the Choir ; accepting the services of Misses X, Y, and Z, thus supplying as many copies of Masses and motets as were needed. She had a wonderful way of giving employment to every member of the Community. If a Sister were not strong enough nor fitted to undertake the whole of an office, she would give her some portion of it, so that no one could ever feel useless or unemployed."

All Religious Communities have been founded in Poverty, though the actual degree in which it is prac-

tised depends upon a variety of circumstances. It may safely be said that Poverty is the sure gauge by which the fervour of a Community may be tested. All falling away from fervour begins by neglect of the spirit of Poverty. Mother Rose Columba not only loved it, but welcomed every opportunity of practising it. Those opportunities were very frequent in the early days of St. Mary Church. The attics, which served the Sisters for a Dormitory, were inconvenient in many ways ; but to these were added the actual privation of what many would consider the necessities of life. At that time the Community had a certain power over their own income from the common stock, and if they chose to receive a destitute orphan by pinching themselves in food and clothing, they were free to do so. With a Superior so full of zeal and charity, and so ardent a lover of Poverty, it is easy to see how such a liberty would become dangerous ; and it was not long before Superiors at the Mother House wisely interfered, and ruled that all the money allotted to the House should be laid out upon the Sisters themselves. The way in which privations were borne may be gathered from the following words from a Conference given some years later :—

“ He who has all things necessary is not poor. Cultivate a love of Poverty, and the inconveniences it brings with it. Look at our Lord, born in a stable, in want of all things.

“ The life of a good Religious is a martyrdom, made up of little acts, loving and seeking after mortifications. I do not mean doing great penances ; but bearing patiently cold,

the effects of Poverty, difficulties of our office, hard work—this is the best of all penances ; for in it there is no fear of conceit : it humbles both soul and body. . . . A mortified life is a truly happy one. If you see a Religious unhappy, it is sure to be from a want of self-denial.”

How closely the sense of the Presence of God and the love of holy Poverty were connected in her mind may be seen in a Conference of which the following formed part :—

THE PRESENCE OF GOD.

“You will remember that we have been thinking of Dr. Hedley’s instruction during the last few Sundays, and the key-note of all he said is that we are made for God alone, and that we must love Him intensely, and cling to Him with all our strength.

“One of the points that he laid most stress upon was, that we must think very often of the Presence of God in our own souls.

“1. He is within us as our Creator. It is by His goodness that we are, and possess all that we have. We should accustom ourselves, then, to think of God, to adore Him, praise Him, thank Him within ourselves. We cannot, it is true, be always actually thinking of God Himself when our work is engrossing as that in the kitchen, or still more in the schools ; we cannot leave it off to say a long prayer, perhaps not often even a short one—an *Ave*—but we can often stop, just for half or a quarter of a minute, and raise our hearts up to our heavenly Father. And unless we accustom ourselves to do so sometimes during our work, we shall find ourselves thinking of it during our prayers ; whereas the habit of turning to God sometimes during the day will be a preparation for prayer, so that when the work is done, and we are free to go to Choir, our minds will be

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ready—I was going to say to enjoy the thought of God—and we shall by degrees, as it were, naturally turn to God as our good Father in every little trouble and difficulty.

“2. God is within us as our Redeemer. Dr. H. told us we should think of our souls as having a tinge of Blood on them. They are bought with a great price, even the Blood of the Immaculate Lamb. And from this point of view, of what great worth are we! And not only we, but every soul has on it the marks of the Precious Blood. We should think of this, and intensify our love of God, and show its reality by praying much for souls, for heretics, and infidels. How many thousands are there who forget, though they know, that they were bought by the Precious Blood! And how many millions who do not even know it! We sometimes wish, when we hear of the success with which others labour for souls in foreign missions, that we also could go and work for God; but we can do much, very much, by prayer.

“3. God the Holy Ghost is within us. Every soul in the state of grace is His temple, His dwelling. His gifts also are within us, though we may make no use of them. We know how sometimes there are powers which we feel we could use, only they have not been called into requisition for so long that they lie, so to speak, rusty; and when they are required we have to try them little by little, and at first do very badly, until in the end, by use, they are again at our service. So with the gifts of the Holy Ghost, which increase and become strengthened within us by repeated acts of the corresponding virtues.

“Dr. H. spoke specially of the three last—Fortitude, Piety, and Fear of the Lord; and said that we have much need of Fortitude to bear patiently all the little contrarities of daily life, which are sometimes harder to bear than greater things, because we exert ourselves more to bear great things as trials when they come.

“We sometimes hear Religious talking so much about, I

will not say inconveniences, for a Religious is supposed to be able to put up with them, but some little trifle that has happened, and making as much of it as though it were some real harm, instead of bearing it—things sometimes which one ought to be ashamed to think of as trials, much less speak of as such. Now the gift of Fortitude helps us to bear all these little things as nothings, and to look at them as they really are, in comparison with the great and real and greater troubles which others have. For what we have to bear in religion is really very little in comparison with what people have to bear in the world. The greater part of the Community have not, and are not required to know of, all the difficulties of providing for so large a number; but it is well occasionally to think a little about it, as it will serve to show that we are almost, I may say in a way, entirely dependent on Divine Providence for all we have: it all comes to us by the goodness of God, and though He knows and thinks of our every want, and has promised to supply our necessities, He has not promised to take away every little inconvenience, for we should then have nothing to suffer for Him.

“[*Note*.—Dear Mother has since told us the exact difference between what we get from Stone and what from Providence— $\frac{1}{1}$; this come from Providence.]

“I say this now, for during this winter we shall have to put up with many real inconveniences when the part of the building begins which is nearest the Convent. We shall be exposed to cold, and draughts, and other disagreeables. But let us bear them; for no blessing comes to us without some suffering; and surely it will be worth all this to reap the very great benefit of a Religious Cloister, which will add so much to regular observance in this House.

“[*Note*.—We have gone through all this; and dear Mother had a severe illness; and now we are reaping the fruits in a beautiful Conventual Cloister, opened Easter 1881. *Deo gratias!*]”

One of the Sisters says :—

“Her poverty was the result of love, and always made one think of the stable of Bethlehem. She loved the old Choir, with all its dilapidation and discomfort; and I believe was secretly loath to have it done up. In fact, she would not have it touched before the Church was finished. It would have seemed a kind of disloyalty, had we been in comfort and grandeur whilst our Lord's house was unfinished.”

Another Sister, speaking of her love of Poverty, says :—

“Her love for this virtue could be seen in all that belonged to her. Her room had little in it; her cell still less. And whatever she did possess, always seemed general property. She used to let us go to her box of holy pictures and help ourselves whenever we wished; and there was another box of work-supplies that had great attractions for us, and which she used to call her ‘hen-box,’ because she said we used to turn over its contents, and scratch in it, like hens in a farm-yard. I had a bad habit of putting pins in the front of our habit, under the scapular, so that they wore it out. She spoke about it several times without effect. I asked her one day what I should do to get out of doing it. She said, ‘Accuse yourself of it in Chapter, and you will not do it again.’ And she was right.”

The same Sister says of her Patience in suffering :—

“She suffered much from weakness of the heart; but though her attacks often lasted for weeks, her patience was unalterable, and she was always ready with a cheerful *Benedicamus Domino*, and a sweet smile, when we went to her room or cell, and would enter into whatever plan or subject we wished to ask her advice about.”

Some of her maxims and admonitions on Patience may fitly be introduced here.

AGAINST MURMURING.

"When you have anything to complain of, keep it for our Lord.

"When something annoys you, do not speak of it *at once*, but go first to our Lord in the Choir.

"When any trial comes upon you, say the *Laudate*; it is a grace from God. If the *Laudate* does nothing more, it will prevent murmuring and discontent. When you have any great extra fatigue, do not count it up; give it all to God."

PATIENCE.

"We are told that 'patience hath a perfect work,' and, 'in your patience you shall possess your souls.' Impatience is a fruitful source of breaches of charity. How often it happens that when some one has said or done something annoying, we give way to impatient feelings, the impatient feelings that naturally arise by words. And then we go and make known to others the cause of our impatience and annoyance, and speak of the fault of another by so doing. Now, we should be very careful not to speak when we are impatient; and the more impatient we feel, the more we should try to control our words; and especially, never talk to others about the things that annoy us, except it be, when necessary, to those to whom it belongs to put an end to any real evil. I remember, not so very long ago, a lady was speaking to me on the subject of what she had suffered by giving way to impatience, and she said, 'It is all my own fault; for I *can* control myself, and *ought* to do so.' If, then, a secular spoke like this, what ought not Religious to do? When, then, some trying circumstance occurs to make one im-

patient, we ought to pull up, and check ourselves ; and if we have begun to speak, there is no reason for continuing ; nor because we have done it before, is that any reason for falling again. That we may not attribute to the soul what is due to the body, it is well to know that we are often *naturally* impatient, that is, there is often some natural cause, we do not feel well, are irritable, or the like, which is a real reason for *feeling* impatient, though none at all for giving way. And now that, as I am glad to say, we are able to read every evening in the Refectory the Roman Martyrology, let us compare the little things that we have to put up with, with the torments of the Martyrs, who suffered, not one little thing only, but so many almost unendurable tortures. Let us think of the sufferings of apostolic men, or of the poor, and then we shall see how very little we have to offer to our Lord in the small things we have to bear in our intercourse with others." (*Twentieth Sunday after Pentecost.*)

The way in which she turned to account the lessons of the different festivals of the Christian year may be judged of by the following extract from a Conference on

THE PURIFICATION.

"This feast is suggestive of many thoughts. . . . There was Holy Simeon led by the Spirit into the Temple. He received an inspiration, and corresponded faithfully to it, and received as a reward the favour of seeing and taking into his arms his Saviour. How often do not we receive an inspiration to present ourselves in the Temple of God ! Are we faithful to it ? We know not what grace may be in store for us if we correspond. Every one ought to go to the Choir at least once or twice in the day, besides the times when we are obliged to go for Office, Mass, &c. It will give us an opportunity for spiritual communion, and

unite us closer to our Lord. But how often it happens that, when urged to go and spend a few minutes before the Blessed Sacrament, we find some excuse. Either we cannot spare the time, or others will wonder what we are doing in Choir at that time, or we have something else to do. And yet we should not grudge those few minutes for other purposes.

“Then, once more, if we think what reward did our Blessed Lady get when she had made the most heroic sacrifice—she was told that a sword should pierce her own soul and heart. And so it often is with those who are making efforts to please our Lord. They make some sacrifice, or do what costs them much; and what do they receive? Not what is pleasant, but the Cross—some suffering, humiliation, or trial. Their work is not accepted by men. No. And had it been, they would not perhaps have fared so well as with God. They meet with disappointment, their efforts do not succeed as they had hoped. This is all a sure proof that our Lord has accepted them and that He is pleased, though man is not content.

“Then we are told that from that time Our Blessed Lady was always in fear, for she well knew that the sword was to pierce her heart through her divine Son; so that when she lost Him in the Temple, she dreaded lest His sufferings had already begun. Our life also *must* be a suffering life. I do not say a *sad* life, but one of suffering. We ought to keep our divine Lord’s interests habitually before us. And if we did, should we not find sufficient matter for sorrow in the present state of things in the world. How many countries are in a state of rebellion against Him! And if we think of France, that country which has given more Saints to God, perhaps, than any other land, and which deserved to be called the Eldest Daughter of the Church, we see how many of the nation are revolutionists. Not but what there are not still many, very many, great and noble souls there who give great glory to God. But we must desire

that His interests should be furthered to the greatest possible extent ; and that can hardly be in a country where men's minds are so tainted with the spirit of revolt. We should then pray very much at present for France."

A few more portions of her Conferences are given on matters of practical importance for Religious, and indeed for all of us.

TIME.

"We have consecrated our time to God. It does not any more belong to us. No such thing as *free* time. God will demand an account of the use we have made of the talents He has endowed us with. Our time is a holy thing, consecrated to God—every moment to be used for Him."

DEATH.

"A tunnel reminds me of how we should be at the hour of death—resting helplessly yet trustfully on the arms of God ; unable to do anything, yet hoping that we shall again see light" (*letter to her Community*). "We are made to know, love, and serve God during life, and then to die and go to God" (*Chapter address*). "Death is the way by which we go to God. Some people desire death through impatience, that they may escape the troubles, cares, anxieties, and disagreeables of this life. This is not a good desire. But to wish to die as that is the way to union with God, we may indeed do ; for we can never be perfectly united to God until we have passed through the gates of death" (*Chapter address*). "Some people have a natural dread of death. This is a consequence of sin. The soul cannot be separated from the body with which it has lived and worked so long without a pang. But very often as the time approaches this terror diminishes or altogether leaves the soul : sometimes it increases." [*N.B.*—This was said ;

when two Sisters who had a great fear of death were present. When they both came to die the dread entirely disappeared.]

“When the body dies by degrees, and becomes a weight upon the soul, we can understand that the soul would be glad to be relieved from it and be free to go to God” (*same address*). “Death is Almighty God’s penance, and we must look upon it as a penance and accept it as such. If we take it in this way and take it properly, not making it a misery and bemoaning ourselves, it will be a most acceptable sacrifice to Almighty God, who will receive it as a sacrifice at our hands. We are told that the act of dying works the most marvellous effects on the soul when done aright. Some people die in a state of semi-consciousness, and are thereby saved much of the pain; but we see in how many of the Church’s prayers a petition for the perfect use of our senses at the moment of death. This is indeed the greatest blessing if we use them to good advantage. I have seen many deaths, but the three which have struck me as being most beautiful were those of our own dear S. M. Philomena (Berkeley), Miss Bengough, and Mary le Bosquet, because they so entirely forgot themselves and their own sufferings to think of others.” “We shall have very great help in the hour of death if we have tried to serve God in life. For we cannot think that our Lord will abandon us then, or that, having so often said, ‘Pray for us sinners now and at the hour of our death,’ Our Blessed Lady, who hears us now, will not then come to our assistance” (*same Chapter address*). (October 26, 1879.)

OBEDIENCE IN LITTLE THINGS.

“It is just in these little things that so many faults are committed. Sisters will go and take things from other offices *without leave*, are careless about silence, disregard notices; and, as I remember hearing our dearest Mother

say, 'seem to look upon the general regulations given out by Superiors as gentle counsels, rather than as things to be attended to by themselves.' But it is in the disregard of such small things that tepidity creeps in. Not that I intend by this to say that any one here is tepid—far from it; but only to point out how very easy it is, by allowing oneself small negligences, to come in the end to serious faults against Obedience, and not to perceive that we are wrong. Of course, we are human beings, and not angels, and therefore subject to err. We may often be drawn into faults through frailty and other causes. But do we see them? Do we, when we have been guilty of some want of obedience, accuse ourselves of it if it is public, and confess it if private? If so, we prove that our conscience is alive, and we make the atonement which is required for our fault.

"It has always been a subject of wonder to me, I may say from the time I came into Religion, how it can be, that among those who have made the vow of Poverty, there should be this subject of complaint, that Sisters should feel at liberty to go into another's office, and make use of things belonging to it without leave of the Superior, and also without leave of her in whose charge the things are. This is to use things as if we were master of them; and to act in this free and easy way is certainly against the spirit of our vow. Where is the Poverty if we are free to help ourselves to anything we want? We must love the little inconveniences of Poverty."

CHARITY.

"And have others nothing to bear from you? To overcome uncharitable feelings, pray for the Sister, think kindly of her, always speak well of her when you hear her spoken of uncharitably, make an excuse for her; that will cure yourself. . . .

"I know it is very difficult, but try to acquire a habit of speaking well of everybody."

RELIGIOUS MANNER.

“Religious manner is of great consequence. If our soul is humble, simple, and deferential, our manner will be all right. Above all, avoid *vulgarity*, which should be far from every Religious. Vulgarity springs from pride; and is putting on a manner. This is soon seen through, and only causes disgust” (*October 8, 1876*).

“Our Lord was the central object of the Holy Family. Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament is the central object of all our work. We live in His House, to do His work; and we should try to imitate His way of working. Bossuet, in a very beautiful meditation, has entered into the particulars of what that life must have been; and of how our Lord must have helped His Holy Mother about the house, and St. Joseph in his carpenter’s business. Think how calmly and quietly, and with what exactness and order, all must have been done. No hurry and confusion there; for anything like noise and bustle is far removed from the spirit of the Holy House of Nazareth. And then—what I specially want to dwell on this morning, for there seems to be a growing want of it amongst us—the humble reverence which reigned there; for we cannot imagine anything like want of deference for others in any one in that Holy House.”

She evidently attached a considerable importance to the “manner” of a Religious. A lady says:—

“Once I asked her if it were not difficult for people of very different degrees of education, culture, and early associations, to get on together in Religion. She answered, ‘It is a proof of vocation, whether they can or not; but, I can say from experience, that a *good* Religious is never vulgar. I do not say *no* Religious is vulgar, but not a *good* one.’”

WEARINESS.

“‘Be not weary of well-doing.’ This is a counsel we stand much in need of as Religious ; for there is, naturally speaking, much in our lives to make us weary. We have given up everything that others find pleasure in. If we had not done so, we might have found enjoyments as others do, who live in the world, and take so much care of their bodies. We have given up much of the luxuries and comforts of life ; and we have given up our own free-will, the noblest and the greatest of the gifts of God, which even He will never take from us without our consent ; and all this is naturally a source of weariness. We go to bed weary, and we get up weary ; we must meet with little return or gratitude from those whom we have laboured much to do good to ; and after we have done our best, how often do we meet with bitter disappointments ! We have given up our affections to our Lord, and are bound to love no one but in and for Him. All this, I say, is naturally a source of weariness. But if we think of it in the order of grace, what is the return for what we endure ? It is our privilege to follow our Lord in His sufferings, to be in some little degree made like to Him, who went about doing good to all men, and in return for this thirty-three years of labour for the good of souls, received only ingratitude and crucifixion ; who seemed, humanly speaking, to have completely failed in His work for souls, when, after all His preaching, there followed Him to Calvary only His Mother and St. John ; who met with so small a return of love and gratitude, that all forsook Him at His Death, except St. Mary Magdalene and a few other holy women. And we are certain, if we are but faithful in doing our duty, that we shall be crowned hereafter. Ours is the highest, noblest state ; and the mere fact of entering it gave glory to God ; and we are sure, by doing the duties of our calling, to be

pleasing to Him. What, then, will it be if we do *more* than merely our duty, if we are generous with our Lord?

"Let us, then, not give way to the feelings to which our nature so often prompts us; but persevere through weariness, or temptation to disgust, and all the other trials of our state, that we may some day be able to hear addressed to ourselves those words we say so often in the Office, '*Veni coronaberis*'—'Come, thou shalt be crowned!'"

A DISCREET FRIEND.

"In reply to a question, whether she approved of a discreet friend upon whose advice one could rely, and from whose relations with or feelings towards Superiors one had nothing to fear, dear Mother said, '*J'ou*,' addressing an individual, 'must be content to be without a friend for the present; it would do you no good, and only foster self-love.' As to the advisability in general, she disapproved of it, and spoke of her past experience of its having done harm in more than one particular case. She laid down the principle, that, though a Sister might be an excellent Religious, and truly desirous of perfection, and discreet in her own office, she has no grace given her for the guidance of any out of that office or sphere. She sees only one side of the case, proposed by one influenced by the feelings of the moment, and hence cannot be in a fair state to judge; consequently, she may lead astray. Hence the wisdom and safety of seeking out those who have authority, the Prioress, Sub-Prioress, or Vicaress, according to the thing in question.

"Those who have the guidance of members of a Community are, first the Confessor, then Mother Provincial, the Prioress, Sub-Prioress, Vicaress.

"We ought to have the humble feeling that each and every one of our Sisters is much better than we are; and if we had this we could not fail in deference or politeness to-

wards others. I do not mean mere conventional politeness, but that which springs from humility and charity, and which as Religious we ought to cultivate. Of course, as our numbers increase, every new Sister has her own peculiarities, and there is more to put up with. But in Religious, all feelings and disagreements should be kept under and mortified ; so that nothing like little rudenesses or want of deference should be allowed to appear. Then, again, a willingness and readiness to help. I fear this is on the decrease. The increase in numbers necessarily makes the work in each office heavier, and so all are more engrossed in their own particular employments ; but there should be a ready will to help in any possible way, to stretch out a hand when called upon, and to forget one's self and one's own work unselfishly for others—not pressing our services upon others when there is a press of work, for that only worries, but being willing to do whatever presents itself, or that we are asked to do. We must aim at perfection, and perfection in little things—not to please others, not even for our own satisfaction. Our Lord puts a nobler motive than these before us, when He says, 'Be ye perfect, because your Heavenly Father is perfect.'” (*Finding of H. Child*, (?) 1878.)

The following letters were written to Sister Mary Aquinas Harting, who was for two periods of four and two years each at St. Mary Church, and who died at Bow, August 30, 1893, after a lingering illness, during which she edified all those who saw her by the sweetness and patience with which she bore her sufferings. Her unselfish character had greatly endeared her to Mother Rose Columba, who always remembered her feast and profession days. These which follow are some of the later ones ; for Sister M. Aquinas acknow-

ledges, "All her early ones, written soon after I left St. Mary Church the first time, I destroyed years ago, at a certain time of fervour, when I felt that I cared too much for her."

GOD ALONE.

J. M. ✠ D. C.

"MY VERY DEAR 'OLD CHILD,'—Your great Patron's feast makes me think of a letter to you, not that I think a letter is required to tell you all the good things I wish the Angelic Doctor to obtain for you. May He answer all the prayers offered by others for you, and then I do not think you will be lacking in good gifts. You will have plenty to think about now that Holy Week is so near. I mean outward things; of the interior I say nothing; and I daresay you will often wish you could put your head in the corner of your stall and be quiet; yet somebody must think and act too, and may not the wearisome thoughts and the aching back be a more pleasing sacrifice to our Lord than selfish quiet. He had not quiet during that night and day (*i.e.*, Holy Thursday and Good Friday)."

GOD ALONE.

J. M. ✠ D. C.

"MY VERY DEAR SISTER AND OLD CHILD,—The long letter seems to be an impossibility, but I must send a short note for your holy profession day—although I hope you do not need a note to tell you all the best blessings I desire for you. May He who is the Spouse of Virgins give you of His choicest gifts—love you with a special love in this world, and when your exile is over let you rest upon His Sacred Heart for all Eternity. Yes, the rest will come, and this Feast of our Blessed Mother's Assumption

is one of the many pledges that we have of our future life. Follow Him closely in this Life, this suffering Life—be near to Him in His Glorious Life. This is what I pray for you, my very dear Sister.

“We go on much as usual and talk of the old times—the white cactus and the strawberries have their tales attached. Many, many changes in many ways, but still in the main it is the same old place. The Altar to-day looks magnificent, and Our Lady, with her Divine Child, surrounded with foliage plants and ferns, seems to be smiling down upon us from the midst of them. God bless and love you. Pray for me. S. M. ROSE COLUMBA.”

GOD ALONE.

J. M. ✠ D. C.

“MY VERY DEAR OLD CHILD,—I was almost afraid this feast of yours would have to pass without a line for you. I had intended a long letter full of Mary Church news. Well, now let me wish you a very happy feast and every blessing your heart can desire, or, even better, that the Heart of your Divine Spouse desires for you. I shall pray and get prayers for you. We are having a beautiful day—grand High Mass—Vespers and Benediction and a long day of Exposition.”

GOD ALONE.

J. M. ✠ D. C.

“MY VERY DEAR SISTER,—I hope you will like a few lines better than nothing. Sister A. Catherine promised to write you a long letter, which I hope she has done, and it will tell you how busy we have been with ‘the address’ for the Bishop’s half Jubilee.¹ It contains nearly

¹ See p. 93.

a thousand words, and it must be finished by the end of this week; three from whom I hoped to get some help failed, or nearly so, which has made it so much more difficult to get it finished in time. After this preface to show you why you are not getting a longer letter, I must wish you every blessing on your holy profession day—an increase of holy love and all you most desire, or, better, all that our dearest Lord sees you want to bring you into closer union with Himself. In these days of infidelity should not we try to make up to the Sacred Heart for all the insults offered to it, and yet how little can we do, and how much less than we might do! Is it not so?

“I thought you would be pleased to see the Canon. He says a ‘Manager’ has been complaining of the severity of the Inspectors. I told him what you said about the Stone pupil-teachers. We have the offer of some French books from Paris. As we have not any of our holy Mother’s books here, would you kindly send me the name of the publisher of her Letters, Treatises, &c.; also of ‘a very nice book,’ lately given to our dearest Mother, ‘All about the Religious Life.’ I do not wish to ask too much, so please send what you think would be most useful (of our H. Mother’s) for general reading. I hear you are agent for St. Mary Church, and so send a commission.

“Mr. Mayo has come home for his holidays, good and useful as ever. No more time, as we have Exposition to-day.—Ever your loving Sister in Christ,

“S. M. R. COLUMBA.”

GOD ALONE.

J. M. ✠ D. C.

“August 13, 1881.

“MY VERY DEAR SISTER,—‘Shades of the past’ remind me that to-morrow is the anniversary of your holy profession, and as I know how great a day of joy it is to you,

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I am sending my congratulations, and hope that it may be a truly happy one, and that you may have bridal gifts from your Divine Spouse. The Bishop's Retreat must have been a great grace for those who were able to attend it. I felt quite sorry that I had been so lately at Stone, and that there was no hope of a second visit; notes, however good, are never the same as the living voice flowing from the living heart of the preacher. We had a grand day on our Holy Father's feast. Here come interruptions, so I must keep my long letter till another day, and only end with every loving wish to an old child in Christ.—Your devoted Sister,

M. ROSE COLUMBA."

GOD ALONE.

J. M. ✠ D. C.

"ST. MARY'S PRIORY, *March 6, 1882.*

"MY VERY DEAR SISTER,—I am in your debt for a kind little note at the time of dear Mr. Chatto's death, so I take the opportunity of your great Patron's feast to repay it. 'Sanctified learning' is said to be the definition of Dominicans. Sanctified teaching seems to be your way of perfection. May the great St. Thomas obtain for you all the graces you need to gain the entire merit of your labours in the schools. Your old friends here do not forget 'Sister Quiny;' Mrs. Coleman especially supposes you have heard of the conversion of her uncle—she certainly does her best to bring him up in the right way. The Mass this morning was offered for Mary Barnett, who died of consumption at Bournemouth on Wednesday. The Canon had a letter from a friend of hers telling him of her death, saying she spoke so gratefully of him and the dear nuns. Lizzie A. has come to the Orphanage. A. has moved to some station far from a church. It was a great grief to his poor wife, who, when here, heard Mass daily; so she

begged us to take Lizzie, who, you may perhaps remember, was a handful.

"The sermons—Friday—are on the principal actors in our Lord's Sacred Passion. Judas and Pilate are the two we have had. Judas being disposed of, the Canon dwelt on the tenderness and patience of the Sacred Heart. It bore with Judas and willed his conversion—laid itself out to win him. Pilate showed the dangers and folly of human respect. Persons naturally severe, and even cruel, are weak in the cause of God. Sunday evenings: Old Testament,—Creation—Cain and Abel—Flood—Tower of Babel. Last evening, Abram, mostly on the call of God from error to truth, from sin to justice, from ordinary Christian life to the Priesthood or to Religion.

"The Salvation Army has sent a detachment here. There was a great noise in the street on Saturday, and we were not sure whether it was caused by drunken men or the recruits. Their so-called piety is horrible blasphemy.

"S. M. Vincent, you know, has quite lost the use of her right side; she is otherwise bright, and quite herself. She has her 'down' days—poor old Sister, she likes to be read to and amused, and can never be left, so we arrange relays. It is too much strain on the Infirmarians. S. M. Sales has been *hors de combat* since Christmas, and S. A. Catherine suffers frequently in her head. The two mistresses are in one room and look very comfortable—poor things, they long to be at their work. I have written this whilst waiting for a Dominican Father, who seems not likely to appear, so I will say Addio—love to M. Sub-Prioress, Sister Teresa Joseph, &c. Ever with much love to yourself.—Your devoted Sister in Christ, S. M. ROSE COLUMBA."

Something has been said about that charm of manner which made Mother Rose Columba so attractive, even to those who had merely a casual acquaintance with

her. But it was in the midst of her own Religious Family that that attractiveness was most strongly felt. The Recreation is one of the most important parts of the day in a Convent. It is the time when the real influence of the spirit of Religion is most clearly perceived, when virtues as well as vices come naturally to the surface, and when self-love or unselfishness manifest themselves without disguise. Those who are engaged in teaching know what a strain it is to keep children in order, and to fix their attention for the hours of instruction. It is in recreation that this strain is relieved, and the mind, diverted into another channel, recovers itself. A good Superior will always take pains to make the Recreation bright and pleasant, so as to be a real refreshment. She will choose interesting books to be read, while the Sisters employ their hands in knitting and needlework; or she will lead the conversation, and make it pleasant, while guarding it from degenerating into frivolity and gossip.

In the early "Villa" days at St. Mary Church the priest's solitary chamber was only separated from the Community Room by a partition wall; and, though he could not hear the conversation, yet he could not help hearing the peals of merry laughter that flowed so sweetly from innocent, childlike hearts. He was often tempted to shout out, "What is the joke?" But he knew that any sign from him would quench the mirth, as more than once happened when, in summer, the Recreation would be held under the verandah, near to a window of the room where he

was having his dinner. Sometimes he was asked to lend a nice book. It was not easy to select a suitable one. Love stories were tabooed. Once he thought he had found just the thing—a story written by a priest, with a battle or two, and no love-making. To his chagrin the Sisters voted it “flat.” However, we may trust one of the Religious for giving a truthful account of the Recreation under Mother Rose Columba’s auspices :—

“I never, in my twenty years’ experience, knew anything like them elsewhere ; they were so bright and happy. She unbended then so sweetly, and not only joined the merriment and fun, but led it. We used to gather round her, just like children ; and she would lead us to the henhouse or the greenhouse, where there was always something interesting, or instructive, or funny to be noticed. One could always be learning, even spiritual things, from her at Recreation. How she enjoyed a good story, and told one inimitably. All will remember the last week’s Recreation, which we forced ourselves to go through brightly by reading Lady Brassey’s ‘Sunbeam.’ She was the life and soul of the Recreations, which were quite dull when she was not there.”

It often cost her a very serious effort to make these Recreations so bright. When so weak through illness, and with her heart burdened with many anxieties, she would sometimes not be able to restrain a fit of crying ; and the Sister who witnessed the scene would be amazed to see her dry her tears, go into the Community Room, and keep the whole party amused until the bell sounded the signal that the Recreation was over.

It may, however, be fairly questioned whether all

this sweetness is a desirable quality in a Superior, as it may issue in attaching the hearts of the Religious, especially of the younger ones, to herself by too human and natural an affection, and so be a hindrance rather than a help to directing them to the love of "GOD ALONE." Mother Margaret was quite alive to the danger of this result, and Mother Imelda spoke of it to the present writer with special reference to the subject of this Memoir. Few things would so endanger the peace and unity of a Religious Congregation as a highly gifted local Superior attaching to herself a band of ardent and enthusiastic Sisters, and forming in them a spirit ever so slightly different from that of the rest of the Congregation.

The distance of St. Mary Church from the Mother House no doubt increased the danger. It is probable that some Sisters going to Stone would carry the praises of their Prioress, and extol her virtues in exaggerated terms. All this would naturally cause some anxiety to the authorities, and prudence would require them to caution the local Superior as to the danger. To a person of an extremely sensitive temperament such cautions would seem like distrust, and cause acute pain. These are some of the crosses that fall to the lot of subordinate Superiors, and they are means arranged by the good providence of God to make them perfect through suffering. A lady staying in the Convent about the time of the elections says:—

"I had been hoping that she would be re-elected. When I saw how tired and worn she was looking, I said, I thought

we were rather selfish in wanting her to keep the office, seeing how glad she would be to resign it. She answered, 'Yes, except for one reason—I have so many more opportunities of suffering in an office like that.'

It has been thought by some that she obeyed too literally the caution that was given her, and afterwards put too great a restraint upon herself in her relations with the younger Religious. One who suffered from it writes:—

“At that time, and all through those six years, she kept me at arm's length, and scarcely, if ever, unbended to me, from the time when she would hardly give me a welcome, to the dreadful day she left us for Australia. Yet, even so, I *lived* upon her spirit, and her every word to me or others, in public or in private, was *food*, real, nourishing, and substantial food for my soul. . . . Her whole existence was always spent in leading souls past herself to God. She *did* attract them certainly, but she never kept them for herself; and I, who, as most witnesses would agree, suffered perhaps more than any one else from the restraint that she put upon herself and others, used to feel, amid the keenest suffering she caused me, that she knew what she was doing, and that she was doing God's work for my soul. There was no want of love in reality: her hardness only made me love her more.”

The above extract will show that she did not feed her young Sisters with sweetmeats. In fact, the sweetmeats were reserved chiefly for those who were spiritual invalids, and unable to bear the strong food of self-sacrifice. If she found a Religious moody and reserved, she would lay siege to that heart intrenched in its own reserve, lavish upon it all her sweetness

and delicate attentions, until at last the icy rampart would melt away, the isolated spirit would discover that it had found a friend, and allow itself to be "drawn by the cords of Adam" to the love and service of God.

There was another portion of the Community upon whom she lavished especial tenderness and care: these were the sick and the aged. She had always a great reverence for old people; but for aged Religious, who had spent their days of strength in the service of God, she thought nothing too good, and no care and attention sufficient to console and sustain them. In protracted illnesses she took great care that the Infirmarian and her assistant were not overworked; and many a time, when more fit to be in bed herself, she would watch by the sick-bed of others, and was always at her post in any case of danger. In a word, she fulfilled to the letter all that the Constitutions prescribe when they say of the Conventual Prioress, "She shall especially watch with maternal solicitude that the aged, the infirm, and the sick have all the indulgences which they require" (§ 661).

The Congregation of St. Catherine of Sienna are not an enclosed Order; yet the maintenance of the religious spirit among the Sisters depends very much upon the fidelity with which they act up to those principles of reserve in their intercourse with externs so clearly set forth in their Constitutions. These rule that—

"No Sister may go to the parlour to speak with seculars without a companion, unless by permission of the Prioress

. . . but the Prioress must very rarely allow a Sister to go unaccompanied to speak with men, whether priests or seculars. Prudent Sisters who have the charge of any office, such as the Schools or Hospitals, or who are employed in visiting the sick or instructing converts, may at times have special reasons which render it necessary for them to confer confidentially with the Reverend Clergy or with others. . . . (§ 239.)

“In all that regards communication with externs, the Prioress herself must set an example to the Sisters.” . . . (§ 240.)

Mother Rose Columba understood well the importance of these wise precautions, and herself set the example of obedience to them. When the Community was small it was sometimes rather difficult to find a companion, and visitors would complain of the time they had to wait before the Sisters appeared. The relaxation of the rule in certain cases mentioned above is capable of being stretched so far as to render the rule of no effect, and so “the Prioress must be solicitous that such necessary intercourse be not made an occasion of abuse.” As a proof of the strictness with which Mother Rose Columba observed this rule, the present writer may be allowed to say that, during the sixteen years that he was Chaplain to the Priory under her Superiorship, she did not speak to him in the Parlour a dozen times without a companion, and those were always occasions when some communication affecting the character of another had to be made.

CHAPTER VII

INTERIOR LIFE

IF it is difficult for an extern to describe fittingly the life of a Religious, and the particular duties of a Religious Superior, it is far more difficult to treat of that interior life which consists in the personal communion of the soul with her God. In this region error is so easy, and yet so disastrous; "for what man knoweth the things of a man save the spirit of a man that is in him?"¹ And an ill-considered word may convey a fatally false idea of the character that one wishes to portray. Moreover, the material within the reach of a biographer is often of a kind that he feels a scruple about using. It is quite certain that Mother Rose Columba would never have written a word about herself if she had thought it was likely to be published. And yet if deference to the known wishes of holy persons while they were living, were universally acted upon after their death, what a mass of valuable information would be lost to the world! Now that all danger of pride and self-complacency is removed, when flattery can no more puff up, nor censure wound and discourage, it is allowable to think that those happy souls

¹ 1 Cor. ii. 11.

will not any longer be displeased that those graces which they so carefully concealed in life should be made known, for the glory of God, and the instruction and encouragement of others struggling along the narrow path that leads to heaven. I therefore venture to say something of the inner life of this favoured handmaid of God, and spouse of Christ.

At one time I had a great many of her own "pencil notes," written mostly during her Retreats, in which she did her best to make a thorough manifestation of the state of her soul, as far as she knew it. But she told me once that she had heard of a Religious who had given her confidence to a priest in letters which he had carefully preserved, and, after this priest's sudden death, these letters fell into the hands of a person, who was one of the last that the Religious would have wished to give her confidence to. She said this in so marked a way that I thought she suspected me of having kept her letters. Accordingly I destroyed most of them, and only a few scraps have escaped. I trust she will pardon the use I make of these.

The foundation of all spiritual life must be the same for every one: that which St. Ignatius places at the beginning of his "Exercises"—the recognition by the rational creature of the end for which he or she has been created, and the offering of the whole heart to the service of God.

No one could know Mother Rose Columba without being aware that she had done this even in her early youth. Then came the vocation to Religion. It is not

given to every one with a true vocation to be able to offer to God a virgin heart ; and God mercifully accepts penance where He can no longer find innocence. Still there is a special happiness in being able to offer Him "a whole heart, never given to any one else."¹ Then comes the special vocation to one Religious Order or Institute rather than another. A lady, now a Benedictine nun of the Perpetual Adoration, who received much encouragement from Mother Rose Columba, in the following account of her own vocation, says :—

"I can never forget all the kindness and help which she showed me during the early years of my Catholic life, both in learning the spirit of the Church in daily life, and, later on, as to the general principles of Religious life.

"One could not but feel rivetted by the way in which she seemed to speak from the depths of her heart whenever she touched on the three characteristics, as she called them, of the Dominican Order—devotion to the Blessed Sacrament, zeal for souls, and helping the souls in Purgatory.

"It is impossible to describe in words the fire which lighted up her countenance, and animated sometimes the simplest words. A few of her sayings, however, struck me so much as never to be forgotten, though even in these instances the force was probably rather in the manner than in the words.

"As to the way of spending any time of Adoration during Exposition, she said, 'I can never read a book when our Lord is on His Throne.' On one occasion Mother Francis Angela (Pike) was talking with us as to attractions to different works in Religion, and said, how

¹ See p. 14.

happy it made her to nurse the sick ; another spoke of the interest of training the souls of children for God ; Mother Rose Columba turned to me with her face beaming, and said, 'St. Scholastica's, with the Perpetual Adoration, is better than all.' At another time I was alone with her, and in talking of this great privilege here, she stopped suddenly, and said, 'It would not do to say it to others, but I *could* wish that my vocation were that ;' then pausing, she added, 'but no—I know mine is here.'

"She liked to speak of the breadth of spirit of her Order, and once said, that a tight rule, which regulated every detail, would drive her out of her mind. Another time she said, she hoped that their external labours kept them from the smallness and narrowness which were apt to prevail in contemplative Communities, however holy."

There is no matter on which souls should be left so free to follow their own attraction as in the method of Prayer. "The Spirit breatheth where He will," and to attempt to stretch every one upon the same lines for mental prayer is to repeat the torture of Procrustes. Many of Mother Rose Columba's best priest-friends were Jesuits. She was very fond of many spiritual books written by Jesuits ; and the book that she habitually used for her meditations was a Latin copy of Padre Avancini's *Vita et Doctrina Jesu Christi* which I had lent her, and afterwards given her when she was setting out for Australia. Yet she never could make any way with the "Exercises." As the Sisters very seldom had the advantage of a preached Retreat, they were thrown back upon what help their Chaplain could give them. The only method of prayer that I had

learned and could teach to others was that contained in the "Exercises." I had the idea for some time that it was only prejudice that made any one unable to follow a method of prayer that seemed so easy and so well adapted to all sorts of persons. The following notes on a *bona fide* attempt that she made to go through them will show how unwise it is to try to lead souls by a different path than that in which the Holy Spirit guides them:—

"*Friday.*—It may interest you to know how I go on in my Retreat, and so I thought I would make a few notes to mark the state of the atmosphere. Last evening I was feeling weary and depressed, and when I saw 'The Exercises' my heart fairly sank within me. To go through them seemed impossible. I compared myself to the horse with the load of wet sand—and movement would be retrogressive rather than progressive. Of course I could read each meditation—do what had to be done—but how? It seemed to me to be a week away from our Lord, rather than in closer communication with Him. I thought, perhaps He was going to withdraw the sense of His Presence, and leave me to the sense of self. Then I thought, you were my guide given me by God, and you had chosen the 'Exercises' for me. I would do my best. Still it would be rather a dry best. But I set to work, and got on rather better than I expected, and had more hope for the morning's meditation.

"But no sooner did I begin to read the meditation this morning than all the old feelings of irritability and dislike to the 'Exercises' returned. Still I tried to follow them, and succeeded pretty well. Did better with Lancelotti, reading for half-an-hour. Afternoon meditation, easy. Made the Way of the Cross which is generally a help to

Contrition. Evening meditation, dull. As I was to be *with the beasts* this morning [*inter bruta animalia*—Composition of place for First Exercise on Sin], I thought it better not to go to Holy Communion.

“*Monday.*—I was very glad to get back to our Lord yesterday morning, though I tried to keep to the penitential spirit of the first part of the ‘Exercises;’ and so, during the sung Mass, continued to pray for the forgiveness of sins, offering the Divine Victim in satisfaction for all my sins. I united myself, as well as I could, with that Divine Offering, but became terribly distracted towards the end of Mass. Could not do much with ‘Hell,’ except thank God for having kept me out of it, when I had so often deserved it.

“I forgot to say that the sermon was rather cheering, though I think I have been more remiss about Confession this year than for many past years. Still I did habitually pray that the priest might see me as I was in God’s sight, and that he might say to me anything that God would have him say. I think also I may truly say that Absolution has been the attraction to the Confessional. When I began to dislike going to Confession, and still more to feel indifference about it, although the indifference might have arisen from weariness, yet I feared it was partly caused by having to some extent lost the sensible horror of sin, and consequently was less desirous to get rid of it through the application of the Precious Blood.

“Evening meditation on St. Mary Magdalen I could not make much of, perhaps because I did not like the way it was treated. Being very dry, I thought I would make the Stations in company with St. Mary Magdalen, and ask for some of her hatred of sin. This succeeded better, and I then felt the use of the previous meditations. Morning meditation, easy; could not get it all in half-an-hour. Second, not so well—tired and dull; still, tried to keep to acts of Contrition.”

Among the scraps that escaped destruction I find the following:—

“As I am writing freely to you, I may say that my will has never turned back from the desire of perfection. Where much has been forgiven, there should be the will to love much. This will I have had. How often I fail, you know. God has been so merciful to me.

“I cannot do all I would, but I hope our Lord will accept the little. He knows that I only want to love Him more, and to get nearer to Him; and I find pottering about self does not lead to Him. . . . I sometimes wonder if you know me better than you did last year. There is not much to know,—a will to love God, and a life of——? You see, Father, why our Lord sometimes makes use of me to help others. He knows that I cannot possibly find room for self-glorification in it. I ought to look inside; and it is not infrequently when I am trying most to help others that the sense of my own sins presses most heavily upon me. I have often noticed this, though perhaps not so much lately.”

These extracts will show, by way of exclusion, what method of prayer was most congenial to the subject of this Memoir. It seemed to her to be loss of time to occupy herself with “Composition of Place,” and other preparations for prayer, when she was actually in the presence of God, and in a mental attitude of adoration. If we may judge by some of the few private notes that have been preserved, written at various times, it seemed to be her practice to fix her attention on some mystery of our Lord’s Life or Passion, and to converse devoutly and affectionately with her Divine Spouse upon His

own acts or His own words. Here is a short meditation on the word of Pilate:—

“*‘Art Thou a King?’* Yes, dear Lord, Thou art a King. Oh, come, and be King of my soul; though Thy sceptre is a reed, Thy diadem a crown of thorns, Thy royal robes a garment of scorn, Thy Throne the Cross, come and be my King. Rule me, possess me, make me entirely Thine; for Thou hast every right to me. Thou art my Creator. Thy Eternal Father has given all things to Thee, and Thou hast redeemed me with floods of crimson Blood. I choose Thee, O my sweetest Lord, as my sovereign Love; and to Thy love do I sacrifice all human love, all affection to creatures, and all love of self. I will be kind to all; but my heart shall never seek its rest or its consolation in created objects. Thou hast, in Thy tender goodness, called me to lead a supernatural life, and with Thy help I will lead it. When humiliations come, make me to see in them Thy love, in thus letting me share Thy shame. If I am treated with rudeness and contempt, was He not mocked as a fool, and spit upon? Who so poor, who so patient, who so kind, as Jesus? Who so obedient, generous, and loving?”

Other passages are written down, though her meditations or reflections upon them have not been committed even to pencil-writing:—

“*Ille autem tacebat.*”

“To seek God, and God alone in all I *do*, in all I *think*, in all I *say*. To take all things as coming from His hands,—not looking at second causes. *He permits all* for some wise end, and will make all things work for good, if we strive to seek His glory in all things, whether great

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or small. Keep your sorrows as much as possible between God and yourself. Speak of them only when it is a *duty*. Suffer, and be silent."

"*Ille autem tacebat.*"

"*Nullam causam* mortis invenio in eo. *Corripiam ergo illum, et dimittam.*" "Hosanna! . . . Crucifige!"

"Quid fecisti?"

"Bajulans sibi Crucem."

"Scio Cui credidi."

"Respiiciens eram ad adjutorium hominum, et non erat."

"*Memoratus sum* misericordiæ tuæ, Domine."

—*Ecclus.* li. 10, 11.

These were evidently texts for meditation, or mottoes to be kept in mind, as the result of meditation. The following are resolutions after some Retreat, written in pencil:—

"One of the greatest causes of not advancing in perfection is the want of perseverance. To assist me, I will frequently read my resolutions, and say the *Veni Creator*. I will be more exact in making aspirations, and I will always make a distinct preparation for Holy Communion. Thanksgiving should be very tranquil. It is always best to begin meditation with a book, and always prepare for it.

"Discouragement is a great hindrance. You will not arrive at union with God all at once. Be patient with self, acknowledge your own weakness, and confide in God. Do not give up because you fail, even many times.

"Humility and charity are to be obtained by humble and constant prayer. Daily examination."

“Three things to be daily petitioned for :—

The spirit of Prayer.

Purity of intention.

Mortification.

‘Non hunc, sed Barabbam.’”

The following fragments have dates upon them :—

“1875.

“Exactitude in spiritual duties. Patience. Charity in thought, word, and deed. Fidelity in little things. Frequently to read and study the Life of our Lord. Confidence in God ; and to have frequent recourse to Our Blessed Lady and Immaculate Mother, and the intercession of the Saints.

“‘Help me, dear Jesus.’”

The following notes are dated 1876, and apparently have reference to a Retreat given in that year by the Very Rev. Father King, O.P., the Provincial of the English Dominicans, and afterwards, for a few short months, Archbishop Coadjutor of Trinidad. She seems to have begun the year with the following resolution :—

“To say at all times, and in all things, ‘My God, not my will, but Thine be done.’ Mother of God, pray for me.

“*June 16th.*—*Rest* to be found in humility. ‘Learn of Me,’ &c.”

The following prayer written on the other side of the same paper seems to have been the result of the Retreat :—

“O my Jesus! I place my retreat in Thy Sacred Heart. Mercifully accept anything I may have done to

please Thee, and mercifully forgive all my negligence and infidelities. Henceforth I desire to live only for Thee, and in Thee. Thy Sacred Heart shall be my model. Teach me to know Thee; teach me to love Thee; I will refer all to Thy honour and glory. I make an entire offering of myself and all that I am to Thee. I desire to make my abode in Thy Sacred Heart, and to cast out of my heart all that is displeasing to Thee. Give me perfect resignation to Thy Divine Will. Make me to live always in Thy Presence. Let all that I do, think, or say be for Thy greater Glory. Teach me how to suffer, and to love suffering, humiliations, and contempt. Let me desire to suffer, and be despised. Give me, O my God, I beseech Thee, a cheerful suffering. Never let me offend Thee by thought, word, or deed; never to avoid Thy Presence even when I fear I have offended Thee. Give me a tender confidence in Thee, with diffidence in myself. Help me to check all vain imaginations, and to look at all things simply as they are in Thy sight. Let me reverence all with whom I live; let me speak and think well of all, and try to be all to all.

“O Blessed Mother, Lady of the Sacred Heart, and Queen of my soul, take me for thy child. Commend me to the Sacred Heart, and obtain for me all the graces I stand in need of to overcome my many faults. In all trouble, do thou, Blessed Mother, lead me to the Feet of thy Divine Son, and not let me leave them till peace is restored.”

A paper in more recent handwriting marks out different intentions for the days of the week, with a special aspiration for each:—

“*Sunday*.—In honour of the Adorable Trinity. Aspiration, *Gloria*, in reparation for those who do not acknowledge God as their Creator.

“*Monday*.—The holy Angels. Aspiration, *Sanctus*, *Sanctus*, *Sanctus*, in union with them by the gift of Prayer.

“*Tuesday*.—Our holy Father (St. Dominic). *Pie Pater*, &c., for the Order, and prayer for the grace of a happy death. *Magne Pater*.

“*Wednesday*.—St. Joseph. Love of the hidden life. Ask simplicity, purity, gift of final perseverance. St. Joseph, protector of the dying.

“*Thursday*.—The Blessed Sacrament. *Adoremus*. Thanksgiving and reparation. Desire to visit and adore Him in every tabernacle.

“*Friday*.—Conversion of sinners. I adore Thee bleeding and dying on the Cross. Acts of thanksgiving.

“*Saturday*.—Our Blessed Lady. The Holy Souls, and special intention.”

Another paper without date is evidently written after a Retreat:—

“Practice for the ensuing year, Union with God. Subject for particular Examen, Practice of the Presence of God. Help me, O my God, for of myself I can do nothing. Make me very faithful and careful in all my spiritual duties, that I may not only do them, but do them carefully, well remembering that tepidity is most displeasing to Thee. Whatever state I am in, make me always come, and present myself before Thee in the Sacrament of Thy love. Thou art there as my Redeemer, as my most sweet and loving Father, my Comforter, my Light, my Joy, my All. Give me, O my most sweet Jesus, an ever-increasing love and devotion to Thy Immaculate Mother. And do thou, O Blessed Mother, take me in an especial manner under thy care. And to thee, sweet Lady, I commend my resolutions; get me the grace to persevere.”

Her Retreats were often times of great suffering to her. Though not in the least scrupulous, she had an exquisitely sensitive conscience, and if allowed to

torment herself by much introspection, she would sometimes make herself seriously ill. Before I knew her well enough to prevent this "pottering about self," her Retreats used to be very formidable matters. She never shrank from the pain; indeed she rather courted it than avoided it; but it was often a needless pain, and productive of more harm than good. Those who have read St. Teresa's Life will remember what mental torture was caused to her, even by such a holy confessor as Father Alvarez, who misunderstood her. So it is one of the trials that those who are treading the higher paths of perfection have to endure, that they have to put up with well-meaning but short-sighted spiritual guides. And yet the pain thus given is overruled for good; since the soul is detached from leaning upon an arm of flesh, and clings more purely than ever to the living God.

Some idea of the way in which the narratives of Holy Scripture occupied her mind, and supplied continual food for meditation, may be gathered from the following letter:—

"The history of the 'little lamb' I remember hearing, when a child, made the subject of a discourse. Some pious souls were shocked at the preacher's choice. I could not understand then why they were shocked; for I had thought it a very touching story, and all my sympathy had been given to the poor man, whose one lamb had been taken; and I was consequently indignant with the rich robber. I suppose childish imaginations often colour older thoughts; and though I can remember my mother's admiration of holy David, I am afraid the memory of the man

and the lamb, that I somehow connected with him, hid all his noble qualities, and it was an occasion of wonder to me how *he* could be 'the man according to God's own heart.' I do not think it was until I had known what the nature of spiritual sorrow was, and the need of crying, *De Profundis*, that my problem about holy David was solved. Then his magnificent unbounded confidence in the infinite mercy, love, and goodness of God broke upon me, and I used to like to dwell upon his words of trusting love, until they seemed to become one's own. God's love for His creatures is one of the most incomprehensible of His attributes. From the Creation down to the present day, what has it been but the creature fighting against its Creator's love? And yet that Love is not weary of seeking us!"

Although but little remains to inform us concerning the manner of her prayer, and her intimate union with her Divine Spouse, yet every one who knew her, either in this country or Australia, can bear witness to the amount of time that she spent in prayer. The Constitutions reckon, among the very first duties of the Sisters, "those hours and times when they are engaged in prayer." It was marvellous how much time she contrived to devote to this holy exercise, without neglecting a single detail of the business or correspondence which her office as Superior exacted of her. While she was at St. Mary Church, the Prioress, Prie-Dieu faced the screen separating the choir from the sanctuary of the Church; and there her white figure might be seen at almost any hour of the day. Yet no duty was left undone, no letter left unanswered; and though she cut short what she considered useless outpourings, yet no Sister really requiring her

Superior's help or sympathy was left to seek in vain for an opportunity of speaking; not even a visitor to the parlour was left long to wait. If she was wanted, and was not in her room, the Sisters were always sure of finding her in the choir. She left it with reluctance, and came back again with eagerness. The magnet of her soul was there—Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament. That "Beauty of ancient days, yet ever new," was always full of attraction for her. Whether she was refreshed with consolation or sorely tried with dryness, the Fountain of life and joy was there—Jesus Christ, yesterday, to-day, and the same for ever. There were several days in the year when the nuns had the privilege of having the Blessed Sacrament exposed for Adoration, and once in the year when the Devotion of the Forty Hours was permitted in the Church. These were days of great joy to her; and it is probable that some foreshadowing of her future work of Perpetual Adoration had already been vouchsafed to her, during those hours that she spent before our Lord.

One of the Sisters wrote, after her death, to the present Prioress in Adelaide, and said:—

"How well I remember, when young in Religion, telling our Mother (Margaret) how I had been first so attracted to the Perpetual Adoration, and had nearly gone to St. Benedict's. And she said, 'Well, child, I hope the day may come when we shall have Perpetual Adoration at one of our Houses. It quite belongs to the Order.' So I feel that you have our Mother's blessing on it; and I pray much for you all, that more and more your work may gain the blessing of God, as it will be more purely for Him alone."

It is evident from passages in her later letters that some words of Mother Margaret on this subject had taken root in her mind, although she had not any idea, even when she found herself in Australia, of the way in which they were to be put into practice.

Her love of Jesus was not only manifested in her devotion to the Blessed Sacrament. It was shown in her love for all the points of His Sacred Humanity, especially the Sacred Heart, the Five Wounds, the Crown of Thorns. She had a special devotion to the Crown of Thorns. I have still one which she had plaited in memory of that which had encircled our Saviour's Head. She used to give these to her friends. Her love for our Lord prompted her continually to make acts of reparation to Him; and these were especially called forth when she heard of any insult offered to Him by ungodly men. In the "Annals" it is recorded that the Community had read

"an account of a horrible outrage perpetrated in France. The Mayor of Giers, near Grenoble, had taken a Crucifix which was hanging on a wall, and had thrown it contemptuously in the public sewer (*dans les latrines*). The Prefect sentenced him to two months' imprisonment. A lady, who offered to have the sewer cleansed at her own expense to recover the Crucifix, was refused the permission to do so. As we all wished to make some act of reparation for so terrible an insult, Mother Prioress arranged that we should go processionally from the Choir to the large Crucifix in the Church, which we did, chanting the *Miserere* and *Parce Domine*. Then, standing round the Crucifix, we sang the Hymn *Salve Crux*, and the prayer."

She could not love our Lord aright without having a great devotion to His Immaculate Mother. This will have already been noticed in the few extracts from her private papers given above. It comes out still more clearly in the numerous occasions mentioned in the "Annals of the Convent," which record the Novenas and other ways in which she had recourse to Our Lady's help in every difficulty. The first entry after her arrival at St. Mary Church records the Erection of the Confraternity of the Holy Rosary, on the roll of which her name stands first. The next entry says:—

"The Community being under heavy money difficulties, we began a Novena before the Immaculate Conception to obtain means to pay the building instalments (for the Orphanage), and also to beg Our Lady to touch the heart of some one to do something towards erecting a Church. On the Feast itself, Mrs. Chatto brought her little baby, who had been very dangerously ill, and consecrated him to Our Lady in our Chapel. Mr. Chatto had given us a £5 note a little time before, and we had every reason to think that he did not intend doing anything more. Our surprise and thanksgivings were very great when he said, without one word on our part, that he knew we had been in great difficulties, and that he meant to make his former donation into guineas; and so saying, put £100 in bank-notes into our hands. We felt that Our Blessed and Immaculate Mother had so signally answered our petition, that it gave us great hope that she would hear the other also, and soon give us the blessing of a Church."

In 1868, we read again:—

"The Church's progress was quite stopped for want of plans. Before the Feast of the Purification we made a

Novena to our dear Blessed Mother, assuring her that our only hope of getting on was in her intercession."

In 1870 :—

"On Easter Monday we began the Fifteen Rosaries to implore Our Lady's help against Mr. Newdegate & Co., who had apparently carried their point with regard to the inspection of Convents. On the following Thursday week we sang a *Te Deum* in thanksgiving for Mr. Newdegate's signal defeat."

She had a particular devotion to Our Lady of Lourdes, and many will recollect the delight with which she welcomed a beautiful statue which was sent to her by Mons. Rainbeaux, in 1874, as a thank-offering for Madame R.'s recovery from a dangerous illness. This statue was carried in Procession, at first by Mother Rose Columba and three other Sisters, but when the Community ceased to take part in Processions in public, it was carried by four of the choirmen in surplices. Some of the ladies of the congregation rightly thought that they could not give greater pleasure to Mother Prioress than by subscribing to adorn this statue with a crown of solid gold. She always kept some of the water of Lourdes, and had great faith in its devout application. In 1877, while Mr. and Mrs. Chatto were in Italy, the "Annals" relate:—

"On the Eve of the Feast of the Ascension, Mrs. Chatto's youngest child, an infant of fifteen months, was taken dangerously ill with congestion of the lungs. For some days it was a matter of great anxiety, knowing what a terrible blow it would be to the parents should the child

die in their absence. Immediately on hearing of the danger, Mother Prioress went to the Daison, taking with her some water from Our Lady of Lourdes. She gave a few drops of the water to the little one, who soon after breathed more freely, and gradually from that time grew better. She seemed to have an instinct that the water had done her good ; and, on the following day, when Mother Prioress went to see her, asked for it."

She never failed to have special offices of thanksgiving for the favours thus obtained. For instance, in 1882, it is recorded :—

"During the month of May, two private Processions of Our Lady took place, as special acts of thanksgiving for many graces received through her intercession, one special act of thanksgiving being for the money received towards the building of the new Guest House, which now was paid for entirely."

St. Joseph was also frequently called upon to befriend the Community. Thus, in 1874 :—

"At the beginning of this year, the funds being unusually low, and many heavy bills to be paid, Mother Prioress made a promise to St. Joseph that 10,000 Glorias should be said in his honour during the month of March, if he would assist us in this necessity. Our saintly Procurator was not to be outdone in generosity ; the day before the Novena commenced in preparation for his Feast, the last bill was paid."

Needless to say, St. Dominic was frequently called upon to attend to the temporal wants of his daughters ; St. Catherine and St. Rose she used chiefly to have recourse to in spiritual matters.

The testimony of one of the Sisters who was with her for several years shows how practical her devotion was, and how far removed it was from being a mere sentiment. She writes :—

“I first knew Mother Rose Columba in the year 1871. I had the advantage of being under her for twelve years ; and as time went on I became very intimate with her, and with her views on Religious life.

“She was a perfect Religious. She loved our Lord with a personal love. Her whole manner and appearance breathed dignity and religious restraint, without being the least stiff.

“The Vows she observed with the greatest fidelity. Her austerity was very great, both as regards mortification of the appetite and all that regarded her personal wants.

“Her observance of Poverty was not only strict, but she went to the bottom of the virtue ; I mean, she was not satisfied with what is generally required, but she inculcated the real hearty laying at the feet of Superiors all that was given one. She was very strict on all points of Poverty with others, and herself. Her cell was of the poorest, and during her long illnesses she had nothing to lie on but a mattress, which was merely a sack of loose straw. She used to scold me because I would shake it up and try to make it comfortable. Her fire was such a wretched little affair that it must have been ashamed to be there at all. Yet she suffered intensely from the cold.

“Her obedience was simply heroic. And I must say that what she paid, that in turn she exacted. Indeed, until real thorough obedience of will and judgment was attained, she was hard. Once she was satisfied on this point, she was kindness itself. During the many years she was Superior, she was constantly making the sacrifice of her own views. Mother Imelda once said of her, ‘She is

the most obedient of Prioresses ; she does nothing without leave, and keeps me informed of everything.' She was careful to have the Rule observed to the letter. Whatever the Rule laid down, that she carried out ; and she had the gift of putting her spirit into others. Looking back, after all these years, one can only say, that, during the seventeen years of her Superiority, the observance was *perfect*, especially in matters of Silence, Poverty, and Obedience. It only shows what power for good or evil *one* may have ; though, of course, she had an exceptional power of influence."

We have seen her teaching on Mortification, and how she explained it: "I do not mean doing great penances, but bearing patiently cold, the effect of poverty, difficulties of our office, hard work. This is the best of all penances ; for in it there is no fear of conceit ; it humbles both soul and body." She set an example of this kind of mortification every day ; but, as in other things, so in this, she went beyond her own teaching, and practised corporal austerities, which most people would consider very "great penances." The present Prioress of the Community at Adelaide, who was with her for many years before they both went to Australia, writes after her death:—

"Her mortifications were far beyond her strength. She wore chains round her waist, and on her arm ; and sometimes took the discipline with a chain."

The Church says of St. Rose of Lima: "Pressing close upon the steep path trodden by St. Catherine of Siena, she girded her loins with an iron chain

that went round her in a threefold band." These things are appalling to the self-indulgent luxury of our day, and many would characterise them as "revolting." But it is the way consecrated by so many Saints with a *consensus* that cannot be called in question; and it is better for us humbly to confess our own weakness and cowardice, than to attempt to disguise that weakness by a pretence of superior wisdom. It would be well for us to lay to heart the words of Father Faber, in his Preface to the Oratorian Life of St. Rose:—

"The *habit* of always thinking first how any tenet, or practice, or fact is most conveniently presentable to an adversary, may soon, and almost imperceptibly, lead to profaneness, by introducing the spirit of rationalism into matters of faith. . . . The question is, not 'What will men say of this? How will this sound in controversy? Will not this be objected to by heretics?' but, 'Is this true? Is this kind of thing approved by the Church?' Then what good can I get out of it for my own soul? Ought not my views to be deeper than they are?"¹

Mother Margaret's biographer says of her that—

"She retained so much of the antique spirit of Christianity as heartily to love the practice of exterior mortification, and to believe that without it the spirit of interior mortification is liable enough to expire. . . . Both her instructions and her example were a continual protest against that false and effeminate spirituality which professes to sanctify the spirit without mortifying the flesh. She preferred those practices of penance which humble both, but discouraged such as afford any lurking-place for self-love or ostentation."²

¹ *Op. cit.*, pp. x., xi.

² "Life," pp. 262, 263.

It is enough to say that Mother Rose Columba tried to imitate her great patroness, in carrying out the lessons she had learned from Mother Margaret.

The importance which she attached to Zeal for Souls, as a necessary consequence of the love of God, may be gathered from the following Notes of one of her Chapter conferences :—

“ZEAL FOR SOULS.

“A lady, a stranger to the Community, talking of our beloved Mother Margaret, expressed a wonder whether the great zeal for souls intimated in her Letters was still preserved among her children. This, and another observation, both made to me within a fortnight, have made me think, and wonder if there is amongst us that ardent zeal for souls which was so remarkable in our dear Mother. You know her one absorbing thought was for ‘the greater glory of God, and the salvation of souls,’ and may we not believe that this is the spirit she would most wish to see in her children? With her it was, Souls, Souls, Souls, and she loved them for the price which was paid for them, the Precious Blood of Jesus, given for each single soul. Shall we not love them, and work for them too? Remember, that to work for souls is to help our Lord in the work for which He came on earth. God made each single soul for His own adoration, to lie for all eternity in prostrate adoration before Him. We must be willing, nay, desirous, that others should share this happiness with us. Not all can teach and instruct, but all can pray; and the reward of the humble persevering prayers of those employed in menial work, thus enabling others to be free to teach, may be the conversion of some souls who would not otherwise have turned to God. Let us examine ourselves, and see whether the present cessation of work, occasioned by the

few who present themselves for instruction, be in any way or degree through our fault. Are we wanting in earnest labour, in penance, or prayer?"

We have already seen in Chapter V. the practical way in which she carried out herself that which she thus warmly urged upon others.

A lady, some of whose conversations with her have already been 'quoted, writes:—

"After telling her about some soul in which I was interested, I added, 'How great the interest is in having to do with souls!' She raised her eyes, with a look and manner I can never forget, saying, 'Oh! is it not indeed?'"

Closely connected with her zeal for souls was the special respect and love that Mother Rose Columba had for priests. Her own words are:—

"I think I may truly say, I have always, since I have been a Catholic, looked upon Priests as a different race of beings; the individual was lost in the 'character.' A Priest was not a man, but a Priest—another Christ. A delusion, if you will, that I have rarely freed myself from, and have no wish to do so."

It was not unnatural for a daughter of St. Catherine to write in this way of priests. She regarded them as the principal instruments of God's merciful kindness towards men; and though she knew perfectly well that priests "have this treasure in earthen vessels," yet her mind was so occupied with the "treasure," that it was only when it was forced upon her attention that she noticed the frail nature of the "vessels."

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She had a great reverence for priests, as "the anointed of God," and she could never understand that antipathy which exists in some minds between priests and nuns. That antipathy takes its rise from College conversations, and anecdotes current among ecclesiastical students. It has its good effect, in guarding young priests against a species of sentimentality which would be dangerous. At the same time, it has its bad side in making them disposed to suspect nuns of a wish to encroach upon the office of the priesthood, and often prevents that hearty co-operation which is so necessary between those engaged in the same work. The present writer had much conversation with the late Archbishop Ullathorne on the subject; and that experienced Bishop said that, when there was a dispute between nuns and a priest, it was generally the priest who was in the wrong; because, while nuns never forgot what was due to them as Religious, priests very often did, and expected them to do things which would be fatal to the spirit of true religious observance—in fact, would make them mere schoolmistresses and not nuns.

Unfortunately, differences between nuns and the priest of the Mission more frequently occur when the priest is very zealous for the good of his people, than when he is indifferent. A zealous missionary is apt to be impatient of the rules by which nuns are bound, and which seem to him to interfere with the plans that he makes for the well-being of his flock. On the other hand, nuns are sometimes too stiff in

cleaving to a fixed idea that they have formed of what their Rule requires, when it is capable of a more elastic interpretation. When a Religious Community have the charge of the Church of the Mission, there must be a variety of occasions on which their views and those of the priest will differ—as to the hours of the Services, the Choir, especially if they are expected to be responsible for a part of the singing, the arrangements of the sanctuary, and many other details. Much tact is required to avoid collision on such points; and it was chiefly owing to the admirable tact of Mother Rose Columba that no serious difference has ever arisen between the Community at St. Mary Church and the priests of the Mission. Whenever any difference of opinion occurred, if it was not really defined by the Constitutions, she invariably yielded; but the priest had very frequently to acknowledge that he had been mistaken, and that she had formed the more correct judgment on the point at issue.

Her reverence for priests caused her to have great sympathy with them; the trials and dangers of their solitary life were matters of great solicitude to her, and led her to pray very earnestly for them. It was this, no doubt, that caused so many priests to speak more confidentially to her than to most people. One priest, in whom she took a great interest, has placed some of her letters at our disposal. It is possible that her words to him may be useful to others. It seems that he had asked her to point out to him any

of his faults which she might have heard of, and which might be an obstacle to his work in his Mission. It appears, from her reply, that she was rather taken aback by this somewhat strange request, but she evidently tried her best to do what her correspondent asked of her without flinching. She writes :—

“If you had not some of the humility which you say I give you credit for, you would not let me write to you as I do. I own I should like to talk to you as ‘friend to friend,’ but this would be out of place. It so happened that I had the confidence of more than one priest before I came into Religion, though I was not very old. But I was then simply the recipient—listened—that was all. In simple truth I will say, I am ready to do in this matter whatever you wish. If it has to cost me a little, so much the better—*in God, and for God*. We neither desire anything else. Our dearest Lord condescends to be a jealous Lover, and, unless I am given over to a reprobate sense, I do not think He would let me do, without knowing it, what was displeasing to Him.”

In a second letter she comes to the point frankly enough :—

“For years I have wished that some one would tell you how very much your manner belies your heart. The impression you often give is that you do not like to be troubled—that you have little zeal for souls. A short answer makes the poor individual regret that she has ventured to trouble you, and she retires with the intention to keep at a distance for the future. You could have unbounded influence over your people, if you would make them feel that you are their Father, and have a Father’s love for them. To win souls, we must not only love them, but have faith in them, and

let them know our faith and our love—meet them half way, and more than half way—even go on our knees, as it were, to beg them to keep out of sin, and to make efforts to get nearer to God. Zeal for souls requires much patience for its companion. Often a kind word will unlock a soul, especially in the Confessional—even a kind tone, or ‘my child’ (which is kept for very rare occasions), sets the soul at ease, and breaks the ice. If the soul feels that a Father’s arm is embracing her, even when the same Father’s hand is using the lancet or pouring in the wine, she confides in the support, even while she writhes under the pain, and is grateful for it. Whereas, if only the wound is given, as it were, by way of painful duty, though good may be done, yet it is not the same amount of good. Not, in a general way I mean; for there are times, no doubt, when the soul is even better for being sharply treated; but I think this is rarely the case. . . . Now, have I done my duty?”

Again, to the same :—

“I think I never told you that my constant prayer for you was that our Lord would take away whatever was an obstacle to your gaining souls to Him. *Now* it seems clearly to me that this obstacle is want of confidence—confidence in God, and confidence in souls. I have often wished you would *trust* people more—not chance comers, who generally manage to take you in, but souls you really might know and trust. Few things rub spiritual ‘fur’ the wrong way so much as a want of trust. Confidence raises some souls, and braces them to nobler deeds. A loving confidence in God will fill the soul with true contrition. I suppose the more we try to love God our *Father*, the more sorry we shall be for having grieved so good a Father, and the more we shall desire to win others to love Him. . . . You gave yourself to God at the Subdiaconate; and how magnificently He gave Himself to you by making you ‘another

Christ,' as St. Catherine called all priests 'the Christs of the earth.' Surely, if you wanted a proof of God's great love for you, this would be sufficient. Why did He bestow so many graces upon you if the crowning gift of final perseverance was to be wanting. Unfortunately, I know all priests do not persevere. But then, I fear, they lead lives very different to yours; in fact, they must have done so, or they would not have fallen. I cannot help thinking that souls, like plants, require a certain amount of warmth and light to make them attain their full growth. When they are well grown, and even while they are growing, a course of east wind may strengthen them; but continual cold and frost would stunt their growth, if not kill them entirely. The strong, well-grown plants will bear most flowers and fruit—yea, and bear up against the north wind when it visits them. So, instead of asking for Contrition for you, I shall ask for a loving Confidence in the boundless mercy and goodness of God. If you *will* make me say out my thoughts, you must not blame me if I forget to whom I am saying them."

These letters give some idea of the sympathy Mother Rose Columba had for priests, and may perhaps explain how it was that priests, and I may add Bishops also, found help and consolation in her conversation and letters.

CHAPTER VIII

THE ADELAIDE FOUNDATION

IN 1883 an event took place which changed the whole circumstances of Mother Rose Columba's life. For a long time it had seemed to her that God was leading her to some sacrifice greater than she had yet made, though she had no idea of the form that the sacrifice would take. She little dreamed that it would be, "Go forth out of thy country, and from thy kindred." It might even have seemed impossible that such a call could come to a professed Religious of the "Congregation of St. Catherine." The Constitutions declare that 'the English Congregation of St. Catherine of Sienna, of the Third Order of St. Dominic, comprises all the Convents of women hitherto founded, or hereafter to be founded, in England, Scotland, and Wales, in dependence on the Mother House of St. Dominic's, Stone, Staffordshire' (*Constitutions*, n. 435). Thus a House even in Ireland, much less in America or Australia, would *not* be comprised in the Congregation. No Superior of the Congregation could require any of the members, under obedience, to undertake or join a Foundation outside the island of Great Britain. The call must come from without.

Two Catholic ladies, Mrs. and Miss Baker, of Morialta, near Adelaide, had visited Stone, and had formed a great attachment to the Community. They had been especially interested in the Hospital for Incurables there; and they wished that they could have a band of these daughters of St. Dominic to take care of the sick in their own city of Adelaide. On their return to Australia they discussed the matter with the Bishop of Adelaide, Dr. Reynolds, who cordially entered into their views, and inquired particularly into the Rule and Constitutions of the Congregation. The circumstance of the different Houses being dependent on the Mother House at Stone, and the Congregation (at that time) being directly subject to the Master-General and his Vicar, instead of the local Ordinary, seemed to his lordship an advantage as likely to give stability and fixity to the Religious Life.

The ladies soon opened communications with the Prioress Provincial, and much correspondence ensued. Bishop Ullathorne from the first took a warm interest in a Filiation of the Community that he loved so much to the place where, forty-four years before, he had said the first Mass ever celebrated in that colony. A most generous proposal was made, viz., that the ladies would defray all the expenses of the passage out to Adelaide of six nuns, and guarantee them an income of £300 a year for their support for three years, at the end of which time it was hoped that the new Foundation might have taken root in the colony and be able to support itself. A Hospital was to be opened at once, and there

seemed every probability that an Orphanage in the neighbourhood of the city would soon be placed under the care of the nuns. The proposal was carefully considered by Bishop Ullathorne and the Superiors at Stone, and it was resolved that the Mother Provincial should make the proposal known to the different Houses of the Congregation, should see whether it met with approval, and invite volunteers to offer themselves for the new Foundation. This voluntary offering was necessary, by the very terms of the Constitutions quoted above, as no Sister could be told, as an act of religious obedience, even to offer herself for the work. In its turn, the proposal was laid before the Prioress and Council of the Convent of St. Mary Church. As soon as the case was stated, Mother Rose Columba offered herself to go. Mother Provincial put the offer aside, and said, "The first question to be considered is, Are we to accept the proposal at all? If the general vote was 'Yes,' then *who* would go would be a second question." However, when the vote was given in favour of the proposal, she repeated the offer of herself. Neither in her case, nor in the case of any other of more than a dozen who offered themselves, was any suggestion made by Superiors. Later on, when the matter had been more fully ventilated, and out of those who offered themselves it was evident that Mother Rose Columba would be the leader and Superior, she met Mother Provincial in London; and the latter said, "Before we begin business, are you perfectly clear as to your wishes and resolutions? Because, if not, there

is ample time to draw back, for as yet we are committed to nothing." She replied, "If Adelaide is given up, I shall look out for something else—California or the Fiji Islands; I should prefer the Fiji Islands." "But," answered Mother Provincial, "there is no question about any of these places." "Well," she said, "that is my reply." It would be impossible to state more distinctly the perfect spontaneity of the act by which she offered herself for the Adelaide Foundation.

It would be an entire mistake to attribute this passionate desire to give herself to a foreign mission to a restless spirit, for she had a great dislike to changes of any kind; or to any want of love for England, or her Convent home there. It is sometimes imagined that monks and nuns are indifferent to such considerations, because they have made a sacrifice of family ties. If there was real indifference, there would be no merit in the sacrifice; but the heroism of the sacrifice is exactly in proportion to the intensity of the affection which is immolated. Aubrey de Vere understood this when he put into the mouths of the monks of Bardeney the expression of a monk's love of his country:—

"A single earthly love is theirs unblamed,
Their country! So the wild-bird loves her nest,
Lions their caves:—to us God gave a Country.
What heart of man but loves that mother-land,
Whose omni-present arms are round him still
In vale, and plain; whose voice in every stream;
Whose breath his forehead cools; whose eyes with joy
Regard her offspring issuing forth each morn
On duteous tasks; to rest each eve returning?"

Legends of Saxon Saints, p. 166.

The proposal to make a Foundation in Australia came to Mother Rose Columba as the answer to the offer of herself with which she had been long interiorly inspired. The only question in her mind was, whether she was right in regarding it as the manifestation of the Will of God. To settle this question she had recourse to the wisdom and experience of the venerable Bishop of Birmingham. Bishop Ullathorne was not a man to refuse to direct a generous soul who applied to him for advice. But, in this case, being the chief Superior of the Congregation, as the Vicar of the General, any direction of his would have seemed like a command. This, as explained above, he could not give as Superior, and therefore he did not wish to *seem* to give it as a spiritual director. His reply was as follows:—

“OScott, *March 5, 1883.*

“MY DEAR MOTHER PRIORESS,—In reply to your grave question, I ought to say that, whoever goes to the South Australian Foundation, it must be a voluntary act, an act of free oblation; as no one, by virtue of her vows, is obliged to go beyond the seas. This you understand, but I thought it had best be stated.

“Next, I should say, that to be ready to go, and to put one's self at the disposition of Superiors, to go or not to go as they may judge best, is an act of generous merit, which is very pleasing to God.

“Thirdly, I should say, that the success of the work will depend upon having a Sister at the head of it who is experienced in the office of government and providing for a Community; and that should you think well to put yourself at the disposal of Superiors, it will facilitate all other arrangements, and inspire confidence in the undertaking.

"From these remarks you will readily gather my advice.

"It will be a very remarkable thing, if a Community of the Congregation is founded in a diocese in which, in the year 1839, I said the first Mass ever offered up in it, in a china shop belonging to a Protestant. At that time I do not suppose that there were more than fifty Catholics in that colony. It was in the fourth year from its foundation, and the chief founders were Scotch Presbyterians. There are now a considerable number of Irish settlers in the country.

"I pray God to bless you and all the Sisters, and remain, my dear Mother Prioress, your devoted Father in Christ,

✠ W. B. ULLATHORNE."

Of course, this threw Mother Rose Columba back on herself; and still distrusting her own judgment, she wished the final word to be spoken by some other person than herself. There were many priests who had known her longer than I had; but as I had been her confessor for the last sixteen years, she preferred to place the final decision in my hands. It was a heavy responsibility, and has caused me great anxiety ever since. I only hope that any priest who reads these pages may take warning by my example, and, if asked for any decision of a similar character, will take more care than I did to obtain accurate information on all the bearings of the case before he ventures to decide a matter involving such serious consequences. I ought to have insisted on seeing the correspondence that had taken place; to have ascertained precisely the nature of the work that the Sisters were expected to do, and how far it was compatible with their Constitutions and spirit;

and also to have got information concerning the other Religious Communities in Adelaide. If it had been impossible for me to have obtained this information, I ought to have declined to be responsible for giving a decision. In that case, she would very likely have consulted some one else. But I am quite sure that if I had told her that she ought not to go, she would have withdrawn her offer. It is a consolation to believe that God knows how to bring good out of the mistakes of His servants—

“There is a Providence that shapes our ends,
Rough hew them how we will.”

Mother Rose Columba, at the time, was grateful for my answer, as this letter shows:—

GOD ALONE.

J. M. ✠ D. C.

“VERY REV. AND DEAR FATHER,—I have not thanked you in word for your *decision*. I thought it would be a meritorious act, and that was one of the reasons why I wished it should be yours. Besides, you have so long had the care of my soul, that it only seemed fitting that you should be judge in so important a matter to me. Yet I am also glad that I followed your advice in writing to the Bishop. I believe it was the right thing, and I was glad to have his opinion—it will prevent after-qualms, lest I had been over-bold even in offering myself for so important a work.

“Will you give the Foundation a *memento* to-morrow. . . . We can only pray that all may be guided by the Holy Spirit—and GOD ALONE to be the *end*.—Ever yours gratefully in our Lord,
S. M. R. C.”

When the six Sisters had been selected by the Council out of those who had volunteered, and the necessary preparations were being made, it was decided that they should sail for Adelaide towards the end of the summer. It was not desirable that so new a departure in the life of the Congregation should be kept before the minds of the Sisters longer than necessary, and the Bishop of Adelaide urged that the final arrangements should be completed as soon as possible. Berths had first of all been taken in the *Lusitania*, which was to sail on August 25. But Mr. (now Sir Henry) Parker wrote to say that the *Lusitania* was the smallest and most inconvenient steamer of that line, and that if the Sisters could be ready for the 12th of July, he would get the berths changed to the *Orient*, which was then the largest and most commodious, and that this would greatly secure the comfort of the Sisters. The matter was referred to Mother Rose Columba. She at once telegraphed, "*Orient*, July 12." It was thought that if they sailed in July they would reach Adelaide before the hot weather had commenced, and so more easily become acclimatised. There was not, therefore, much time to communicate with their friends in Australia. When two parties confer at a distance of some 15,000 miles apart, and a letter cannot receive an answer within ten or eleven weeks, it is not to be wondered at that some things that were understood in one sense in Australia were taken in a different sense in England, and *vice versa*. It is easy to be wise after the event, and say that all these details ought to have

been thoroughly made clear on both sides before the little Community were shipped across the ocean ; but it was thought that things were clearly understood, which the event proved were not.

As "no man knoweth the things of a man but the spirit of the man that is in him," so it is very difficult for any one to know the spirit of a Religious Order or Congregation without being a member of that Order or Congregation. Externs are commonly apt to imagine that what can be done by members of one Religious Institute can also be done by those of another. Certain broad distinctions, as the difference between the active and the contemplative life, are readily perceived ; but people generally do not understand why the work of the Nuns of the Good Shepherd should not be taken up by Orders that give their care to orphan children ; or why some Religious who devote themselves to nursing sick women and children, should make any difficulty about nursing men, since the latter are taken charge of by the Sisters of Charity. Those who have read the Life of Nano Nagle will remember the disappointment of that noble woman when she discovered that the Ursuline Nuns, whom she had brought over to Ireland at great expense and trouble, were precluded by their Rule from teaching or visiting the poor outside their Convent.¹ The disappointment turned out happily in the end ; for it led to the establishment of the Presentation Nuns, who are doing such good work in Ireland,

¹ See "Life of Nano Nagle," pp. 74, &c.

and also gave the Ursuline Nuns their first footing in that country.

In the Constitutions (No. 637) it is expressly laid down—"No Reformatory or Penitentiary, no Hospital for Men or Boys, and no Boys' School of any kind, shall in future be undertaken by the Religious of our Congregation. This regulation does not, however, exclude young boys from being admitted into our day-schools for girls in case of necessity." Mother Rose Columba and her Sisters thoroughly understood and entered into the spirit of this prohibition, and concluded that the Hospital which they were invited to take charge of was for women. On the other hand, Mrs. and Miss Baker were full of the idea of a general hospital, and if they had been told of this Rule, supposed it could be modified. The results of this misunderstanding will appear later.

Two of the Sisters selected to form the Filiation had been for some time employed in the Hospital at St. Peter's Priory, Stoke-upon-Trent; but it was considered advisable that a somewhat wider experience should be gained by the Community in hospital management before leaving England. Accordingly Mother Rose Columba, and one of the others selected, crossed over from Plymouth to Dublin in order to visit the well-known Hospital of "Mater Misericordiæ," managed by the Sisters of Mercy. There they would have opportunities of learning much as to the position and practical duties of Religious who have charge of a large hospital. The Sisters of Mercy were extremely kind to them;

and during their stay in Dublin they made the acquaintance of several of the clergy, and especially of the Rev. Father Russell, S.J., who was much interested in the new Foundation.

When first the Filiation was agreed upon, it was intended that any postulants who might offer themselves to the Adelaide Community should pass their novitiate at Stone. There were many advantages in this arrangement, but there were some disadvantages. The circumstances of life are so different in England to what they are in the colonies, that there were several reasons which made it preferable that novices should spend the two years of probation in the place where they were to pass their lives. Hence it was settled that two young ladies who had offered themselves as postulants should accompany the party to Adelaide, although one, who was very young, had already spent some weeks in the Novitiate at Stone. Their numbers were still further augmented by one who had obtained her certificate as a trained nurse, and by another who, without any idea of joining the Community, yet wished to make herself useful to them. When it was definitely settled that they were to start in July, they found that a lady related to one of the nuns at Stone wished to sail with them, as she had a young friend for whom a long sea-voyage had been prescribed as the last hope of saving her from consumption. These hopes were not realised, as she had to leave the ship at the Cape, and returned home to die.

The Catholics, and indeed many Protestants also, of

St. Mary Church, were anxious to show Mother Rose Columba their appreciation of her labours for their welfare during the seventeen years that she had lived among them, and they subscribed to present her with a purse of about a hundred guineas ; even the very poorest contributed something towards it. Other little offerings were made of things that it was thought might be useful in their future home. Bishop Ullathorne kindly obtained for them, through Monsignor Stonor, a special blessing from the Holy Father on the new Foundation. A few days before they sailed, they had the happiness of hearing that three Jesuit Fathers were to sail by the same steamer, so that they would not be destitute of spiritual assistance on the way.

All the six Sisters, Mother Rose Columba Adams, Sisters Mary Ermenilda Joyes, Mary Raymond Lum-berry, Anne Joseph MacDonnell, Mary Magdalen de Pazzi Ward, and Sister Francis Philomena Ullathorne, niece of the Bishop, met at Stone, and on July 11 proceeded with Mother Provincial to London. They spent the night at the Sisters of Providence, at Haverstock Hill, and received a visit from Father Albert Buckler, O.P., Prior of St. Dominic's Priory, who, with Father Dominic Trenow, showed them the Church, and promised to say Mass for them the following morning. Mother Rose Columba, in a Journal she kept of their voyage, writes :—

“Before offering the Holy Sacrifice, Father Prior asked the orphans under the care of the Sisters of Providence to pray for us. After the Mass he said a few words to

us on the greatness of our undertaking ; and then reminded us that we were only carrying out our Religious Vows—we had given up all to enter Religion, and now God was asking us to add another sacrifice, namely, the sacrifice of our country and our friends, to go into a distant land, where all was strange to us. But we were going with a triple Benediction. We had assisted at Mass, which had been offered especially for us. We had had the blessing of receiving our Lord in Holy Communion. And now he was going to give us Benediction. The Father's voice trembled, and it was evident he deeply felt all that he was saying. With bowed heads we received our Lord's Blessing ; and then, as if to remind us that we had for our Protectress the Blessed Mother of our Lord, the Sisters had prepared the orphans to sing, 'Hail, Queen of Heaven, the Ocean Star.'

"As the packing had been done in three different places, and many small additions had been necessary, we started on our way with fourteen 'small parcels!' Having arrived safely at Broad Street, Mrs. W. Parker advised us to take a cab for the luggage and two Sisters, the rest to walk to Fenchurch Street, to meet the special train to the ship. As we did not know London distances, we tried to follow Mrs. P.'s advice ; but soon found that one cab could not take the luggage, and so hired two ; sent S. M. E. and S. M. de P. on in one, while S. F. P. and myself saw to the loading of the other. S. M. R., S. A. J., Misses Winthrop, Mayo, and Horan were to walk. I found the cabman did not know his way. He had a poor wretched horse, which could scarcely hobble, and as we passed the clocks in various places I saw the hour for the train to start was drawing very near. At last we arrived. I saw the other cab standing, still loaded with luggage, and the nuns shut up in it. Both 'cabbies' seemed at a loss as to what was to be done, so I got out, released the other Sisters, and got men to take the luggage down. There

was no porter to be seen. The luggage was deposited on the pavement, and we stood guard over it. Never shall I forget that scene—all sorts of men and boys offering to remove the goods. At last I got some one to secure a porter, and he got another, and rushed upstairs with the things, bidding us to follow. The platform was more than crowded—all sorts of people—heaps of luggage—confusion of every kind. Mother Provincial and Sister T. J. were to meet us, but I could see nothing of them. The party who were walking to the station had not arrived; I feared they would be too late. Officials said the train was overdue, and that there would not be another. It seemed needless to wait longer, so our party of four were making for the train, when Mrs. P.'s son rushed to us, saying that the train was going, and that all the rest were in. I cannot say how thankful I was."

It turned out that the rest of the party had been waiting for them, as will appear from the account of the scene that Mother Provincial gave in a letter to the Sisters at Stone. She wrote :—

"Sister T. J. and myself started in good time from Bow, got to Fenchurch Street, found out the platform from whence the *private* train for the emigrants and their friends alone were to start, and set to work to discover in the immense crowd some vestige of the Sisters. Not a sign of them. At last, time drawing on, we beheld S. A. J. and S. M. R., and, darting on them, learned that they had walked from Broad Street, conducted by an orphan, and that the other four with luggage were coming in two cabs. How the walkers could have arrived first was a mystery. However, as it was so late, we agreed that the best thing to be done was to secure a carriage, and keep places for the rest. No empty carriage: the train was rapidly filling;

at last we found one partially empty. But *where* were the rest? An unknown gentleman put his head in: 'Are you all right? I am Mr. Cashel Hoey.' He is a friend of the Wards, and in the Foreign Office. I had telegraphed to him, begging him to meet us, and go to Gravesend with us, as he had offered his services. 'No,' I said, 'all wrong. There are four Sisters lost: do go and find them.' Then two women put in their heads: 'Is it Rev. Mother Columba?' 'No, it isn't; do go and find her in the crowd, and bring her here.' Then a young gentleman, Bernard Parker: 'I suppose you are all right.' And we sent him to look. Back they all came: there was nothing to be seen; and this went on until the bell was ringing; and at last Mr. Cashel Hoey, streaming with his exertions, could only say, 'You must go on, and they will have to join you at Plymouth.' Imagine what we felt! We could only pray to St. Anthony, and implore them to make a last effort. At length we beheld our two friends coming along the platform literally dragging the lost four; the carriage door opened, and Bernard, I won't say threw in, but next to it, one after another, three over the number for which there were seats. The door was slammed, and off we went. We had to stand, sit on the ground, sit anyhow; and even now I do not rightly understand how it came about. It was laughable to talk over, but at the time it was real anguish.

"We took three-quarters of an hour getting down to Tilbury; and then came the descent from the train into the steam-tender. Mr. Cashel Hoey again appeared as our protector, and led the way for us, so that we kept together, and got on board safe. On the tender we found the Jesuits; and I made bold to introduce my Sisters and myself. Father Sturzo is a Sicilian Duke, and a very nice person; the other two are warm-hearted Irishmen. They had been prepared for us by Father Matthew Russell: they promised three Masses a day, &c. At last we came

up to the big ship, anchored in the centre of the river. Such a monster! It took a long time to embark. The emigrants had to go first, and show tickets; and friends followed, showing permits. At last we crossed the little bridge, and found ourselves on the *Orient*. By this time it was 12 o'clock, and we had to leave again at 1.30." . . .

In spite of the drizzling rain, some of their friends came to see them at Greenwich, and one of the former children in the Orphanage, who was in service at Gravesend, brought them flowers and fruit, as a last token of love. They watched Mother Provincial and her companions until faces were not distinguishable. At 3 o'clock the great ship loosed from her moorings and slowly dropped down the Thames.

They had a smooth passage down the Channel until they neared Plymouth, when a ground swell gave most of them their first taste of sea-sickness. At Plymouth, the present writer, in company with two of their friends, paid them a short visit on the evening of the 13th, and found them in good spirits. The following morning a large party of us went out in the tender to bid farewell to those whom we were hardly likely to see again in this world. The account of the voyage will best be told in the words of the travellers themselves.

CHAPTER IX

*THE VOYAGE—PLYMOUTH—AT SEA—TENERIFFE—
THE HOSPITAL—TABLE BAY—ARRIVAL AT PORT
ADELAIDE—KIND WELCOME—THEIR NEW HOME.*

THE Journal begins with the starting from Stone, as has been related in the last chapter. Further we find—

“*July 14.*—This morning the first Mass was offered in the ‘music saloon,’ a large room, or rather a kind of very wide gallery over the dining-saloon. The Altar was formed of one of the saloon tables placed in front of the organ, which formed its reredos. The low tones of the priest and the general surroundings, so unlike all that one had been accustomed to, made us feel that we were pilgrims, and that the Great Sacrifice was not understood either by passengers, some of whom were gazing in at the ports, or by the stewards, who were laying the breakfast below in the dining-saloon. It was a great happiness once more to receive our dearest Lord, and to know that, through His merciful Providence and the Intercession of His Blessed Mother, we might hope often to have that happiness. The presence of the Jesuit Fathers (FF. Sturzo, Murphy, and Keating) we owe to the many prayers that were offered for this intention.

“Soon after breakfast, Canon Brownlow, Father Keily, Mrs. Pike, Miss E. Nugent, Mr. Mayo, and Mr. Wilcocks came on board. Mr. Mayo was accompanied by his brother Herbert, who regretted that he was not one of the

passengers. It is difficult to speak when the heart is full ; and every one seemed to feel it was better to keep to surface-talk. Soon the signal came for visitors to leave, and all hurried off to the tender. It was again a drizzling rain. We watched the tender out of sight, or rather until we could no longer distinguish our friends. The last sight was Canon Brownlow's hand raised to give us a parting blessing."

The next entry is of sea-sickness, which lasted until Monday. Among the passengers on board the *Orient* were the Anglican Bishop of Tasmania, Dr. Sandford, and his family. On Sunday it is said :—

"We could not go to Mass; it was impossible to stand. One of the Fathers was too ill to say Mass, and the congregation consisted of one person. It was poor consolation to hear afterwards that only seven of the saloon passengers appeared at dinner, and four of these had to leave before dinner was over. In the afternoon Miss Sandford came and asked if she could do anything for us, gave us lime-water, and was so kind and thoughtful, only anxious to get us some relief. Although it was impossible to say either Office or Rosary, yet it was easy to join in spirit at the 11 o'clock Mass, and the afternoon and evening Benediction.

"*July* 16.—Slowly recovering, but all feel intensely stupid—could only sit and look at the sea ; the deep blue of the water contrasts with the pale blue sky.

"*July* 17.—No incidents. Sat all day on deck. All better except S. M. R. and S. M. E. Evening on deck. A very striking scene in the moonlight, the passengers gathered in groups, or walking up and down.

"*July* 18.—Heard that we were likely to speak a ship ; all letters to be ready by 5 P.M. Spent the day in writing

and talking. We say Office on deck, either sitting or walking. In the evening, the captain said he hoped to reach Teneriffe by daybreak."

One of the letters written on this occasion is given here :—

GOD ALONE.

J. M. ✝ D. C.

"S.S. 'ORIENT,' *July 18, 1883.*

"VERY REV. AND DEAR FATHER,—This morning I heard Mass and offered Holy Communion for you, and some others at St. Mary Church, those who I thought might perhaps have missed me most. I have not yet awakened out of my dream, only the scenes are changed. Now the past is a dream, and we seem as much at home in our present life as if we had always been used to it, and yet what a change a week has made; only seven days ago we were all at Stone, and now on the deck of a steamer in 31° N. lat. The deck of a steamer! And our surroundings. Close to my left is the Bishop of Tasmania and family, quite the most 'superior party' on board. Really, the eldest daughter is a charming girl—so pleasant, and quite a Good Samaritan in her way. She was very kind to us when we were so ill on Sunday; and seems to be a general aid to a young mother who has a weakly baby, and does not seem able to do much for it. The Bishop is very like—in face and voice; I made friends with him this evening. Persons of all sorts are lying about in various attitudes—men, of course, taking the best places. Miss Ward joins our party, and is very pleasant. A young deacon who gets himself up as a priest at times, and then appears in brown holland, and supposes himself to have all faculties—he is of the Bishop's party. Two Methodist ministers, many ladies, and divers sorts of men. 'No one seems to notice nothing,'

and each go their own way. F. Sturzo keeps his eye on us. He is very friendly when he does speak. But F. Murphy is quite at home with us, and tells endless amusing stories; we see a great deal of him. F. Keating seldom speaks. We have had three Masses each morning, except Sunday, when F. Sturzo was too ill to say Mass, and we all too ill to make any attempt to get to the saloon. No one of our party could stand, and such was the case with many others too. The sea was dashing up against the ports, and the ship rolling fearfully. We were passing the Bay of Biscay. Since then we have had splendid weather. There is the deep, deep blue of the sea, and a gentle breeze. It is rather warm—about 90°, I think. The nights are the worst. Our cabin is close to the kitchen and the engine-room, and we get the heat and smell of both. Most of the time we spend on deck, under some very good awnings. Last evening we were able to remain on deck till 9.30. We tried your telescope on the moon and found we could see well with it. To-morrow we go on shore, as we make the land at break of day; and, as the ship coals, we are better out of it. I have not yet said that Teneriffe is the land. Every one is very cheerful; and, as all are talking around, it is very difficult to write anything coherent. You will be glad to hear we have an opportunity of exercising charity. The stewardess asked us to visit a lady who had been ill, and was lying all alone in her cabin, and had not a friend on board; so we look after her as much as we can. F. Sturzo does not remain at Adelaide; but they (the S.J.) have a College or House there. We have found a quiet spot in the saloon for Saturday morning (*i.e.*, for Confession). You shall hear more from the Cape, please God. We are promised ten days more of fine weather, and then ten days of rough, and then cold weather. We have not seen a sail, or even a bird. Yes! one bird this morning, like a greyish-brown gull. No opportunities for the microscope except on insect life. Plenty of that, but not very objectionable. I

have made friends with the captain. We have a quiet table in the saloon, and a steward to wait upon us, who stands behind my chair! Miss Winthrop's presence is a great comfort, as she conducts us about, though now we are tolerably at home, except for one thing. We are all well to-day and in very good spirits. I scarcely know what I have written. The Bishop's daughter (Miss Sandford) hopes to come and see us at Adelaide. Perhaps when we are really there we shall wake up. When you have time you must tell me anything of interest at St. Mary Church, which now seems so far off—quite of the past. F. Murphy is the F. Murphy of the "Apostleship of Prayer." He is very amusing. Time passes very quickly, and the absence of twilight makes the evenings short. The ship has electric light. I do not think I could see to read by it, so when we can say Office we must say it early. For some days it was impossible to read or write—one's senses seemed seasick, incapable of being of any use. I have written to Mother Provincial a letter much like this. S. M. G. will be glad to know that Miss W. is looking very well, and has not suffered much. I think she and F. are looking better. F. Morris, S.J., sent a kind letter of farewell by F. Sturzo. Thanks for yours by Miss Winthrop. The many prayers have procured beautiful weather for us. Did you write to F. Austin?—Begging your blessing, ever yours very gratefully in Christ,

S. M. R. C."

The Journal gives a graphic account of their peep at Teneriffe :—

"*July 19.*—Very little sleep ; a beautiful moonlight night. Just in the early dawn, looking through the port, we saw Teneriffe—a sort of vision of beauty, scarcely coloured by the rising sun ; its general hue was a pale lilac, and the cloud was resting on the peak. We went on deck a little

before six. It was a very lovely scene. The sun had just risen ; the island in the near distance ; heavy barges putting off with coal, and smaller quaint-looking craft with baskets of fruit. The first Mass is at six ; and after hearing the three Masses we returned to the deck. Even during the Mass it was impossible not to know that something was going on. The whole ship's company and all the passengers seemed to be making holiday ; and to the ordinary holiday sounds the unusual noise of the Spanish boatmen making bargains was added. The ship was to coal, *i.e.*, take on board 400 tons ! a troublesome as well as a dirty business. All who could went on shore, as it was impossible to remain on board. One of the ship's officers secured a boat for us. Miss Ward, Miss Wilcocks, and some other ladies joined our party. The boatmen soon took us to the jetty through the bluest of blue water. Having landed, we inquired for the Church, and soon found ourselves at the Church of San Francisco. At first we thought it was the Church of our Holy Father, as he (St. Dominic) held a prominent place in the images and paintings. The Church was handsome, but not in good taste. The Images were smartly dressed, and kept in cases with glass fronts. Yet there was something that spoke of the faith and love of the people, even in those things which we could not admire. There were many beggars, and the children were running about, quite at home. The Saints in these cases are formed into a kind of reredos to the Altar. Our Holy Father had a Chapel to himself, besides being in a case. St. Thomas was also represented, and St. Anthony of Padua, and St. Clare. There are fifteen priests attached to this Church. The Blessed Sacrament is not reserved in the Church, which was a great disappointment to us.

“We looked into the Public Gardens, if gardens they could be called ; they were small, poor, and dirty—not a tree or a shrub worth looking at. We tried to make our

way to the other Church, and were following directions given, when we met three ladies, very tall and handsome, with mantillas and fans, and prayer-books in hand. The gentlemanly-looking man of whom we had made inquiries, spoke to the elder of the ladies, and she greeted us in pretty broken English. She said she would be so pleased to conduct us to the Church; and would we like to see the Hospital? They had just come from a Function there, as it belongs to the Sisters of Charity, and they were celebrating the Feast of St. Vincent. Of course we gladly accepted such an escort, and we went first to the Church of Santa Croce, which is larger and handsomer than that of San Francisco, but much in the same style. There was a beautiful little Chapel, entirely covered with wood-carving—Altar, reredos, and walls, all so handsome, but falling into decay, and in some places the carvings are broken. The Chapel is never used except for the 'Altar of Repose' and for marriages. There was one remarkable picture—Our Lord surrounded by Saints, and streams of Blood flowing from His sacred Wounds on the Church militant and suffering. The Blessed Sacrament was reserved here. From this we were taken to the Hospital, a new building not yet all finished. Like most of the houses, it was white, with pea-green adornments, *i.e.*, shutters, balconies, and window-frames. As we passed through the hot, ill-paved, and not too sweet streets, we noticed that house after house would have its cages of birds, mostly canaries. There are no shops, or very few; some workshops, all poor and small; and the inhabitants mostly poor and wretched-looking, and badly dressed.

"When we arrived at the Hospital we were taken immediately to a room filled with Spanish ladies, who had come to the Hospital to celebrate the Festa. All were dressed in black, with lace mantillas and fans. They received us most warmly, and asked us to partake of the sweet cakes and wine which were prepared for the visitors. The Sisters of

Charity were looking so bright and happy. The scene was thoroughly un-English. All were talking rapidly, and the fans also were being used rapidly and gracefully. We, having partaken of the cakes and wine, were taken over the Hospital, many of the Spanish ladies accompanying us. Some could speak a few words of English, and some a little French. We all noticed their extremely courteous manner and their affability. The Hospital is for men and women. There were about forty patients in all, and never did I see poorer, uglier, or more wretched-looking creatures. Those who attend upon them will have a great reward. Attached to the Hospital is an Orphanage for girls and boys. The children were better-looking, some of the boys even handsome. Most of these children, of whom there were about forty, are foundlings, and some of them were infants only a few weeks old. In one of the rooms there is a 'Turn,' very like that between our cloister (at St. Mary Church) and the guests' dining-room. Near this is a bell, which rings into a room where two nurses sleep, ready to receive any child put into the Turn. There are only ten Sisters for all the work, but they have several lay assistants. The garden was small, and, like the others, dry and poorly cultivated. From one of the windows we saw a large field of cactuses: they looked like withered cauliflower plants. They are used for feeding cochineal. These insects were formerly much *cultivated* for dyes, but now they are in little demand; and this is a disadvantage to the natives, as it has taken from them one of their few sources of income. The Sisters and ladies were much interested in our future, and promised to pray for God's blessing on our work.

"Our conductress and her daughters took us to see the Market and the Public Gardens. We were surprised to see that they have no protection from the burning sun except the fan, which they held sideways over their heads. The Market was small and poor; fruit small and unripe—green oranges and lemons, small apricots, greengages and

bananas, melons and prickly pears. The gardens were small, and not pretty ; only the pepper-tree looked graceful—very like a weeping-willow ; the Plumbago Mexicanum large, but dusty ; the oleander also large, but dusty and faded. Our friend begged we would come to her house and rest, as it was quite near. We entered a courtyard, and ascended a wide handsome staircase, which led to an interior closed balcony, on to which the drawing-room opened—a large, airy room, furnished in English style, but carpetless. We were here introduced to the Vice-Consul and his family—our conductress was his wife—and again we were warmly welcomed. The cool room was very refreshing after the hot dusty streets. After resting for some time, the Vice-Consul and his wife offered to accompany us to our boat. I forgot to say that we were taken to see a ‘ Butt of Canary,’ and made to taste it.

“Although the day had been full of interest, we were not sorry to get back to the ship. The coaling was not over, and everything was very black on board. Whilst at dinner the men who had brought the coal had to leave the ship. They passed our port, and looked in as they passed—black from head to foot, but apparently very happy. They rowed off in two large barges, a sharp contrast to the beautiful scene around. The ship was lying near the shore, in 300 fathoms of water. The Grand Canary looked in the distance like a luminous cloud. Many of the men had large knives at their girdles. There were many soldiers about the streets, some looking like English postmen with the addition of a sword. At 7 P.M. we steamed away.

“Teneriffe left rather a sad impression on one’s mind. It is not fair to judge of an island by its seaport ; and we were told that there are forests and large towns in the interior. But the poverty and squalid appearance of the natives we saw made one pity the whole of them.

“*July 21.*—Ship in sight ! A mail steamer bound for

the West Coast of Africa. We keep close to the African coast. Very hot. We enter the Tropic of Cancer. Went to Confession under difficulties. Arrangements made by the purser.

"*July 22.*—Heat more than intense. We had three Masses. Anglican 'Divine Service' (by order) at 10.30. Whilst it was going on, F. Sturzo gave us a little Conference on Devotion—to be interior, universal, and persevering. Heat increased. Again 'Divine Service' on deck. We got a quiet place, and F. Sturzo again came and talked a little with us; I say a little, but it lasted about an hour.

"*July 25.*—Head wind, still fresh, all pretty well. The first officer, Mr. Northcote, came and had a chat, and told us many interesting things about the ship. He promised to take us over her, and on to the bridge, which is my ambition, when we are at Cape Town.

"*July 26.*—St. Anne. Many thanksgivings to St. Anne for her care of us. We crossed the line at 9.15 A.M. No demonstrations are allowed on board. Some quiet amusements go on from time to time, games on deck, and concerts in the saloon. Most of the passengers are friendly amongst themselves and towards us. We have the name of the 'Happy Family.' It is amusing to see the friendship between the Jesuit Fathers and the Bishop of Tasmania's party. F. Murphy walks about with the Bishop's son on one side and his 'Deacon' on the other. The deacon presides at the 'Early Celebration' on Sunday, and the Bishop at the 'Choral Service' held in the saloon. The deacon expressed a hope that the 'Choral Service' did not in any way inconvenience the Fathers and ourselves. F. Sturzo said, 'No, not us; but that some of the passengers had complained.' 'Oh, I care nothing about that, provided you and the nuns are not disturbed.'

"F. Murphy gave, as a proof of the way in which Irishmen are found in all parts of the world, a few examples.

Father de Smet told him that on one occasion he had been preaching by means of an interpreter to a tribe of savages. Presently he saw a tall fine man approaching—the chief—covered with paint, and his head decked with feathers. F. de Smet felt a little uneasy. In a little while the head feather was pulled, and he was greeted with, ‘Riverend Father.’ ‘Riverend Father!’ said F. de Smet; ‘where did you learn English?’ ‘Shure, from me mother in Cork.’ He then presented his squaw and ‘childre,’ all of whom he had instructed and baptized. In the late Egyptian war some of the S. J. Fathers were in trouble about their luggage. A swarthy-faced turbaned Egyptian came to the rescue with ‘Lave it to me, your Riverences; I’ll see to it. Shure, I’m no Egyptian at all.’

“*July 29.*—Sunday. Mass as usual, though under difficulty, as the ship was rolling and pitching. Sat in the music saloon in the evening. There were few there except ourselves and the Bishop’s party. I had a long chat with his lordship. He was very pleasant, and spoke highly of Catholic Religious.

“*August 3.*—Unfavourable wind; all unwell, some very poorly. Managed to recite Vespers and Compline, and Matins and Lauds of our Holy Father’s Feast in our cabin. A terrible night. The ship tossed and rolled, pitched and shook, groaned and trembled. Every one was ill, and some frightened. Mass (on the 4th) was impossible. Just at 4 A.M. the ship gave a terrible lurch; everything movable in the cabin was thrown about in wild confusion; and the sounds from the pantry and galley spoke of much damage done to plates and dishes.

“The ship lay to at 7 P.M. in Table Bay.

“*August 5.*—Mass was said, but not all were able to go to it. Towards mid-day all had recovered sufficiently to go on deck. There stood Table Mountain, covered with its usual heavy mist. Many of the passengers went on shore. The weather was cold. Table Mountain is rather awful

than beautiful. It looked a dark purple, almost black, with a heavy cloud resting on it. The Devil's Peak is close to it, and also dark and cloudy, though the clouds did not rest always on it. The day was cold, and a heavy swell on—the water 'sea-green.' We saw three rainbows, or parts of them, during the two days we remained. 'Coaling' commenced at an early hour, as a thousand tons were to be taken on board. Two very large lighters were on either side of the ship. Many negroes and Kaffirs were helping. As we were near the part of the deck above them, one fine-looking black man put his hands in an attitude of prayer, and evidently wished us to know he was a Catholic. I made the sign of the Cross, which he then did very correctly. I then showed the large crucifix of our Rosary, to which he kissed his hand so reverently. He then said 'Roman,' and pointed out two more blacks. A little party soon formed, and we gave them a little money and some medals and scapulars, and they were very pleased. We went below to get a supply for them, but did not get another opportunity to speak to any; they were all engaged in the 'coaling,' which went on till midnight.

"*August 7.*—We were soon aware that the ship was again in motion, for about 4 A.M. 'we shipped a sea' in our cabin; the port had not been properly closed. The same in the next cabin. S. F. P., whose berth, like ours, had received the shipped sea, went with me to the ladies' boudoir, where we had a few interruptions. Before the morning was over I had to go back again to our berth, and remained there all the next day. Every one of our party was more or less ill, and Mary Mayo complained of sore throat."

Here the Journal comes to an end. Mother Rose Columba had intended to finish it; but so many letters had to be written as they neared their destination, and

after they landed, there seemed to be no time. The following letter was posted in Adelaide :—

“ ST. MARY’S PRIORY, *alias* ‘ S.S. ORIENT,’

“ August 18, 1883.

“ I was so sorry not to have sent you a letter from the Cape. Since we have been on board we have had a poor time of it, and the rounding of the Cape was by no means pleasant. A squall struck the ship one night, and it was terrible to feel the power of the waves ; the ocean seemed to be making a plaything of the ship, and she groaned and strained as not liking her position. Ever since we crossed the line the wind has been against us, and the ‘ tropical heat ’ was soon changed to cold—even intense cold ; and we had to wrap up as well as we could, and sit together in the little boudoir to keep ourselves warm. Until our Holy Father’s Feast (August 4) we had the Holy Sacrifice offered every day, and sometimes we were able to hear two, and sometimes even three, Masses ; but on our Holy Father’s Feast the ship was rolling so terribly that neither could the Fathers say the Mass, nor could we have assisted at it. To comfort ourselves we read the 106th Psalm, and specially commented on the absence of *sense*, as that is just what we feel,¹ so unable to use one’s brain. Let no one think a sea-voyage is a pleasant thing. Not the smallest interest ; no sight worth seeing—wide ocean, wide ocean, and a few sea-birds.

“ August 23.—Since writing the above we have had a gale ; lost three sails, and were terribly beaten about. Still there was not any danger, though, as the waves struck the sides of the ship, it sounded like an irregular cannonade.

¹ “ Qui descendit mare in navibus. Ascendunt usque ad cœlos, et descendunt usque ad abyssos : anima eorum in malis tabescebat. Turbati sunt, et moti sunt sicut ebrius : et omnis sapientia devorata est.”—*Ibid.*, vv. 23, 26, 27.

On Tuesday we entered the Australian Bight, and the weather has been warmer and calmer ever since, and in three days we hope to land. . . .

"The S. J. Fathers are very kind to us. Father Keating, who has a good deal of quiet humour, suggested that we should tell any of our friends who inquired about the pleasures of the voyage to hire a boat, row out of sight of land, and remain in it a week. They would then see as much as we have seen, and feel as much as we have felt. . . . As it is, I think all the discomforts and *contretemps* of the voyage are good signs, and far better for us than if all had gone pleasantly. Besides, there is very much to be thankful for. No accident to any one, and the captain considers the voyage to have been most favourable. He said he had never before passed the St. Paul's Island except in a storm; we had only a gale."

On Saturday night, August 25, the *Orient* cast anchor in Larg's Bay, off Port Adelaide. Meanwhile great preparations for their arrival had been made in Adelaide. A great bazaar had been inaugurated to defray the expenses of the new Hospital, and it was said that £1000 had been cleared for this object. A large house had been secured in the healthiest part of North Adelaide, which had once belonged to a former Governor of the colony; and as soon as the *Orient* was signalled, a temporary Altar was erected. The Bishop, the Vicar-General, and some other priests went alongside in a boat; but the yellow flag was flying, in consequence of two or three cases of measles having occurred during the voyage, and no one was allowed to come on board. However, after certain explanations with the authorities, the Sisters were allowed to land about noon, and Mrs. and

Miss Baker came in the tender to welcome them. They got into the train, and were not a little surprised to find the railway passing through the streets, like a tram in English towns. In about an hour they reached Adelaide, and drove to their new home in Ward's Street. The Bishop and Dean Kennedy, the Pastor of the Mission, were there to receive them. And that which gave them special joy was to find that the Blessed Sacrament had been exposed in the Chapel, and they were welcomed on their first arrival in a strange land by Our Lord Himself, to give them His Benediction. The Bishop kindly promised to come and say Mass for them the following morning, and Mrs. and Miss Baker, after hospitably attending to their creature comforts, showed them all over the house and grounds. In the evening they had a pleasant visit from the three Jesuit Fathers, who came to wish them farewell before going on to Sydney. Thus ended the eventful day of their arrival in Adelaide.

CHAPTER X

ADELAIDE—UNFORESEEN DIFFICULTIES—WHAT WAS TO BE DONE?—THE HOSPITAL—PLANS PROPOSED —TAKING COUNSEL—A NEW CONVENT—DESCRIP- TION OF ADELAIDE

THE first feeling of the little Community on finding themselves once more on *terra firma*, after their long tossing on the ocean, was one of great thankfulness to Almighty God for their safe voyage. There was too much to be done in the way of unpacking, and getting their Chapel in order, for them to realise at once where they were, and what they had to do. Their spirits were cheered by the hearty welcome they had received, and the kindness of the Bishop and his clergy. Their coming had been expected for some time, and hopes had been raised that a new era in hospital management was about to dawn in Adelaide. The medical faculty are always glad to hear of any improvement in nursing arrangements; and within a very few days after their arrival almost every physician and surgeon in the city had called upon the Sisters. It soon became clear to Mother Rose Columba that an unforeseen and serious mistake had been made. The medical men asked questions which showed that they took it for granted that the Hospital was to be for men as well as women. The authorities at home, and the Sisters who

came out, had both taken it for granted that it was to take charge of a female Hospital that they had come. It was an embarrassing position for them. What was to be done? It was not a question of whether they liked the work of nursing men or not, but of what they were bound to do or not to do. The Prioress' first duty was to seek direction from her Superiors in England. When it cost 10s. 8d. a word to telegraph home, words must be few. However, they sent a message to Bishop Ullathorne, asking whether they *could* undertake the nursing of men. The answer came back that they could not.

One of three courses had to be adopted. They must either return to England, or else the clause in their Constitutions must be modified; or, if neither of these alternatives were possible, a temporary compromise must be found. At the first glance it might seem that the clause in the Constitutions might be modified, so as to admit of their undertaking the nursing of men as well as women. Other Religious Communities make no difficulty about it, so that there could be nothing contrary to the religious spirit in their doing it also. It must, however, be borne in mind, as was observed above, that each Religious Order and Congregation has its own spirit, and what is right for one Religious to do is not necessarily right for another. Their vocation, their training, the habits of thought and feeling which that training has formed in them, are different. "Every one hath her proper gift from God; one after this manner, and another after that."¹ For Mother Rose

¹ 1 Cor. vii. 7.

Columba to have required her Sisters to undertake the nursing of men would have been to oblige them to act in direct opposition to the whole spirit of their previous religious training—in fact, to do that which they had a vocation *not* to do. Bishop Ullathorne's negative put an end to all further question on the subject. Should they, then, return to England? For some reasons this would have been the most easy solution of the difficulty. But there were many considerations which rendered this course undesirable. They had all suffered much from the voyage, and to encounter another sea-voyage at once was a formidable proposition. The expense of such a journey was very considerable. Perhaps even nuns are not altogether above the sense of shame at the confession of failure which such a return must bear on its face. But above and beyond such lower considerations as these lay the further question, What was the Will of God in the matter? The sacrifice of country and friends had not been made to please men, but for GOD ALONE. They had all prayed very earnestly to know His Will, had taken all the means within their reach to know that Will, and they could not bring themselves to believe that all was to end in a fiasco. They had a profound conviction that God had some design in bringing them all those 15,000 miles across the ocean, and that there was a work for them to do for Him in that land where they found themselves. The Bishop of Adelaïde, and the kind ladies who had borne the expense of their journey, had had certain good ends in view. The Sisters

themselves had probably each of them her own ideas as to their future work. But above all these God had His purpose to carry out, and all human ideas and wishes are made to serve "the purpose of Him who worketh all things according to the counsel of His own will."¹ It seemed to them, therefore, that they would be flying in the face of the Providence of God if they went back, and returned to the country from whence they came out.

There was only one other course to be followed, and that was a kind of compromise. The Hospital was evidently intended principally for men; in fact, during the first year of its establishment there were only three women in it. They could not therefore undertake to do the nursing themselves, but they might engage others to do the actual nursing, while the Sisters took the superintendence and management of the institution. This was what they proposed to the Bishop and to the charitable founders of the hospital. Their offer was accepted for a year, so that there might be time to see how it worked.

It must have been a great disappointment to Mrs. and Miss Baker to find that the Sisters could not themselves do the work for which they had brought them out; but, with great delicacy of feeling, they tried to conceal their disappointment, and have remained kind friends to the Sisters ever since.

The Hospital was opened, and there was soon occupation enough for the Sisters and the nurses they engaged. As time went on, another difficulty presented

¹ Ephes. i. 11.

itself. One of the best rooms in the house had been set apart by Mother Rose Columba as the chapel. Where our Lord should be lodged was her first concern. Then the other rooms on the first floor were necessarily devoted to the patients. The community were consequently located in the basement. It was thought they would find this the most convenient arrangement, as it would be the coolest part of the house during the summer heats, of which they had not as yet any experience. In the meantime, however, they found that the warm weather following upon the rain caused the damp to rise some three feet on the walls, and some of the Sisters became unwell. Then, there was no possibility of making that separation between the Conventual part of the building and the public Hospital which was required for the carrying out of regular religious life. Nuns require a house of their own, if they are to have that freedom which is essential to their happiness.

Mother Rose Columba no doubt made these difficulties known to her Superior at Stone. The only intimation that I had of them was contained in the following short letter :—

GOD ALONE.

J. M. ✠ D. C.

“CONVENT DE SPIRITU SANCTO,
STRANGWAYS TERRACE, NORTH ADELAIDE,
August 29, 1883.

“You will see we have arrived safely. We are in the agonies of unpacking, and being introduced to Australian

society, so you must not expect a long letter. We have had a most hearty welcome from all whom we have seen. The Bishop named the Convent. We were so grieved to hear of the Archbishop of Sydney's death (Dr. Bede Vaughan). He will be so much missed. I shall not be able to write to our dear Bishop by this mail, as I am constantly called off to give directions. The house is a large one-storied building with a basement.

"*Private.*—We were expected at once to take in young men to nurse; and I fear our kind friends are disappointed, and there are many rocks ahead. So pray much for us. It is well we *are* here, and have not now to decide. The one joy is in the hope of doing something for God's glory.

"F. Sturzo was quite sorry to part with us. He said he hoped we should not be proud if he told us how much edification and consolation we had given him on the voyage.

"The 'Testimonial' money has been most useful, and I should like contributors to know this. S. M. R. C."

The next letter enters somewhat more into details as to their first impressions of Adelaide:—

GOD ALONE.

J. M. ✠ D. C.

"CONVENT DE S. SANCTO,
September 6, 1883.

"VERY REV. AND DEAR FATHER,—Very many thanks for your welcome letter. . . . We are too new in the Colonies to form any definite notions. . . . All the priests say there is much work to be done; and all have the difficulties of much to do, and little money to do it with; so it is a constant strain and anxiety for them, and, I fear, hampers them in their work. The Colony is said to be very poor at present, and there is no hope of amendment until next year. Of our plans and work it is too early to

speak. A priest remarked this morning, 'Here it is all money-getting' for religious purposes and for trade. The mass of the people are Protestant or nothing; the Catholics poor, and not prominent; but there is much less bigotry than in England.

"The Sisters of St. Joseph have all the poor Schools, the Sisters of Mercy a Middle School, and the Dominican Second Order the young ladies' School. The Sisters of St. Joseph are of native growth, very hard-working, and live much like the little Sisters of the Poor. I like their Mother-General very much. She is a large-hearted woman. They do much good here and 'up country,' where they go in twos and threes, and keep up religion where there is no priest. The priests are quite like those in England. They generally call here in twos. I do not know whether it is the custom. We are under the Dean, who is both kind and friendly.

"Everything is very dear except meat, and that is about two-thirds of the price in England. A gardener wanted 8s. *per diem* to put our wilderness in order; but we could not afford that, as the Hospital has to be provided with everything, and the greater part of the Convent also.

"Most of us have been more or less given to colds and coughs. They are in fashion at present.

"Our Chapel is a large handsome room, well suited for its purpose. I come in spirit sometimes to your Church. It is a great change to leave it and the Convent, and to come here, where all has to be done. How glad I shall be when we get a little more into shape.

"In a week or two we shall descend to the basement. Every one says it will be a boon in the hot months. I propose to call it Bethlehem; for, though large and well divided, it seems something of a cave to our English notions. We are so glad to have the Chapel, Divine Office, and our Mass, that the rest is only a minor matter.

"S. M. R. C."

A few more extracts from other letters written during this time of uncertainty will show how careful the sisters were not to take any step without advice and mature consideration:—

“*September 12, 1883.*—You will have seen from my last letter that our position here is not too pleasant; nor is it easy to see one's way for the future.

“*September 15.*—We had a visit from the Bishop yesterday. He was most kind and willing to help us; and, although he had mistaken our ‘works,’ thinking we could take men and boys in Hospital and Orphanage, yet he is willing to have us as we are.

“*September 20.*—Many more lights, and many more difficulties. . . . In time we shall have a ‘High’ Day-School. We *could* not stay on here, when it is an Hospital. More than this, I would not, except with the hope of something more of conventual life.

“*September 26.*—To-day we have had the Bishop, the Archdeacon, and the Dean, all to sit in judgment on our difficulties, which I had to explain to this venerable assembly. Rather formidable, but it had to be done, and the Bishop was *most* kind; greatly approving of another house, and a Matron for this. Continue to pray for us. I think all will be better for this Cross to begin with.

“*Rosary Sunday, 1883.*—To-day it is rather difficult to keep the tears back. They have not been *allowed out* once since I left. There was enough to bring them up, and to drive them back too. . . . I shall like Adelaide when we are able to help the Bishop and the priests. I cannot tell you how kind and considerate they are to us. If you can spare time, I wish you would write a few lines to Dean Kennedy, St. Lawrence's, North Adelaide. He has been like a brother to us. He is now trying to get us a house

above ground. But it is all in the good Providence of God, and He knows how to supply.

"P.S.—You will, I am sure, be glad to hear that I have had a long talk with the Dean, who now strongly advises us to stand our ground, and not sacrifice one iota of our religious life or our freedom. . . . I am writing to Mother Provincial, to ask leave to take another house. We cannot remain here. The 'basement' is not fit for us to live in, and we could not keep up regular observance if present circumstances continued. We all feel alike in this ; and all would rather risk a move than remain as we are. . . . I am proposing a Matron for the Hospital, and that we should go to a Convent."

GOD ALONE.

J. M. ✠ D. C.

"DOMINICAN CONVENT, STRANGWAYS,
NORTH ADELAIDE, *October 11, 1883.*

"VERY REV. AND DEAR FATHER,—You will not, I hope, be tired of notes, though not pencil ones. If you do not mind the trouble of forwarding letters, I can often send them to you, and put in a few lines at the same time. Thanks to the kindness and energy of the Dean, we have got a house ; but, though it will add much to our bodily comfort, yet it is no little additional strain on the mind. We shall have to live in both houses, to keep an eye on the Hospital and its inhabitants, though it is only five minutes' walk. The rent, too, will be a consideration, £200 per annum. There are hopes of pupils to help to meet it, and above all the good Providence of God. It would have been impossible to have remained much longer in these dark places, with no light or space, to read or work, and with the sudden changes from heat to cold. The Dean was determined to get us out, and I am sure will do all in his power to help us to get pupils. 'Splendid work' is still prophesied. A

school is wanted, so it is said, by Protestants as well as Catholics. I hear the former are very angry about our having come—that looks well! A young lady is strongly attracted to us, but fears to be converted; so she told me to-day she should go quite away to avoid any influence. Pray for her, as she will require great grace to break all the ties that hold her.

“I shall not write often now, as we shall have to work hard to earn our rent. S. M. R. C.”

GOD ALONE.

J. M. ✠ D. C.

“DOMINICAN CONVENT,
NORTH ADELAIDE, *October 19, 1883.*
Heat 95°.

“MY VERY DEAR FATHER,—I have again to thank you for a long letter; you and Mrs. Watson tell me the St. Mary Church news.

“I was very sorry to hear of dear S. F. Angela—subprioress I suppose no longer—where is she? If at St. Mary Church, say everything most loving to her from me, and tell her I often think of her unselfish devotion to others; perhaps we shall meet again. She could not have borne the journey. At Teneriffe I thought she might have done so, and that it would have done her good; but when the cold and rough weather came, I was glad that neither you nor she were exposed to it. The tropics are all very well, except a few days of intense heat, only unbearable at night! After crossing the line the weather cooled—almost cold—water like a lake. I began a journal, but for days could not write, so it has to be made up; when finished, I will send it to you. We moved into the new house on Monday (St. Teresa). I do think our Lady of the Rosary has got it for us. We began the fifteen mysteries on the first of October. It is so quiet after the perpetual motion of the

Hospital and its visitors. The house is rather a stylish-looking villa, with balconies, &c., looking on the Parklands, a very extensive view over the plains, and a cool south aspect. We have turned the double drawing-room into the Chapel, and a very pretty one it makes, though not so large as that in the Hospital. The Bishop told the Dean not to leave us without the Most Holy ; so, after Mass on Monday, we prepared a table in the new house, and the Dean soon came with our Lord. That Presence made it Home at once. We then moved the Chapel furniture, and all was ready for Mass next morning. The new house is about five minutes' walk from the other. A 'trolley,' namely, a dray, carried the heavy goods, and we the light ones. I think our friends in England would have been amused to see the transit. The trolley cost £2, so we have to be our own light porters. The road, though a public one, is very quiet, and no one took any notice of us. We are nearly settled now after our move ; and for the first time since I left Stone I am alone. I do not think I have had six hours alone since then ; on board, besides the usual occupants, our cabin was naturally the rendezvous of our little party, the emporium of things wanted on the voyage : and, thanks to friends at St. Mary Church, those wants were supplied.

"I have not yet told you of the general aspect of Adelaide. The sky is the one beautiful thing, and that is beautiful by day and night, when not cloudy ; the sunsets are sometimes magnificent, the crimson light remaining in the sky until the stars appear, not only a few degrees above the horizon, but spreading far over the heavens, no words to describe it, and no artist's brush, not even Turner's, could paint the living light-red, yellow, green, and white blending into a deep-blue background of sky ; the ground then looks a pale olive-green, buildings are lost sight of, wrapped in a sort of green mist which makes the whole distance look like country. Very different in the morning light ; daylight shows brick building and railway sheds. Such absurdly

small trains, three and five carriages: the engines give a scream like an animal in pain; they are at some little distance, but I suppose the clearness of the atmosphere makes them appear nearer than they really are. Most of the trees are the red gum, something like our birch, but not so graceful. The Norfolk Island pine is a very handsome tree. Most of the trees bear evidence of being recent plantations.

"We offered to decorate a wooden Tabernacle for one of the School Chapels about a mile from here. It came to us to be done. I did the design, and S. F. Philomena the painting; so we carried our work home and lost our way. It was rather heavy, and the day hot, but at length we arrived. We saw more of Adelaide than we had done before, and some parts are very pretty, something like Torquay. Pretty villas, with brilliant little gardens, backed by blue hills; the lights on the hills are lovely, sometimes blue, sometimes purple and lilac; the light and the sky either soft pale, or dark bright blue, with prettily, or rather grandly, tinted clouds. S. F. Philomena and S. Cecilia have gone to the same school Chapel to-day to paper the Sanctuary, that is, a sort of cupboard at one end of the school; at present the bare wall is the reredos, and such a wall. The priest asked if we could do something to improve it. S. F. P. decorated two of the terra-cotta vases, and gave them to the same Altar; they had only glass ones of different colours, and such cruets! I will say this: the priests I have seen are all anxious to do their best, and improve the state of things. They have so much to contend with, you can have no idea of the difficulty of getting things done, labour so expensive, and the labourers so idle. Did I tell you the Bishop came one evening to the night-school, and gave the children an instruction on devotion to Our Lady? I heard afterwards that he was much pleased with his visit. His Lordship is most desirous that we should get hold of the young people. On Friday evening

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I showed our pictures of Lourdes to the children, and promised they should see those of Paray-le-Monial on Sunday, those that you brought. The scrap-book is coming in useful. A sand-storm is going on at present, rather like a sea-fog to look at, but you can smell and feel the sand. Also a high wind. The cattle do not gather under the trees for shade, so I suppose they are used to the heat. . . . Sand-storm over, but the heat is great."

All new foundations have their difficulties and hardships, however much the kindness and generosity of friends may endeavour to make things pleasant. Religious Communities are sometimes accused of being too keenly alive to their own interests as a Community, however unselfish and self-sacrificing each Religious may be in that which concerns her own individual comfort. The obligation of Superiors to take care of the property of the Community, of which they are only the trustees, sometimes lends a colouring to this accusation, especially when they have to defend their lawful rights in a Court of Justice. The present writer cannot endorse this accusation; and, after some years of intimate acquaintance with nuns, has come to regard them as the most generous and unselfish people on earth, although there are none whose generosity is so often abused. The first thought of Mother Rose Columba, when she found that she could not carry out the wishes of the generous friends who had expended so much money in bringing them out, was to contrive some means by which the Community could earn their own livelihood, and devote the sum promised for their sup-

port to the maintenance of the Hospital. Some of the Sisters were highly accomplished ladies, and all were ready to turn whatever talents they possessed to the common good. They found that it was possible for them to take a few pupils in music, drawing, French, and other elements of a liberal education, without interfering with the work of other Communities already in the field. Their artistic powers in illuminating, and their skill in embroidery, might also be turned to account in making Church vestments. By degrees orders for work came in, and they collected around them a little band of pupils. Still, £200 a-year rent was a considerable sum for them to earn, and the allowance made from the Mother House, though larger than that apportioned to their Sisters in England, scarcely met the modest amount that was necessary in Australia to keep body and soul together. Perhaps they carried too far their repugnance to making their wants known, for they had friends both in England and Australia who would have willingly come to their aid had they known how sorely they were sometimes pressed.

One of the "artists" writes about this time on their prospects:—

[No date.]

"The case of *Terra Cotta* was beautifully packed: everything in perfect condition. Thank you very much for sending me so much material to paint upon. There is a talk of forming a class among the ladies of the place, for sewing, or rather embroidery and illuminating; but I do not know whether it will come to anything. I am advised to begin by teaching the painting on terra-cotta.

I do not know when there will be time for these classes ; as I am to be in the Hospital, besides having the habit-room ; and in furnishing Convent and Hospital there is a great deal to be done in the sewing line. Sister X. has managed to make off with six of the largest terracotta vases : there is a dearth of vases for the Chapel ; none except the few brought from St. Mary Church. The little Chapel is very devotional. We are to live in the basement of the house, rather in the style of catacombs. Every one says it will be an advantage, especially in the hot weather. At present it looks rather dreary work, as the weather has been chilly and wet. It seems so strange to sleep in the basement,—Community Room and Refectory have flag floors. All the house except Chapel and basement is to be given up to hospital. Sister F. P.”

It is very beautiful to see how, in the midst of all these anxieties, Mother Rose Columba was as much alive as ever to the sorrows and sufferings of others, and as ready to show that sympathy with those in sorrow which is so sweet and consoling to an afflicted heart. The following letter is to a young Religious at Stone who had just lost her father :—

GOD ALONE.

J. M. ✠ D. C.

“NORTH ADELAIDE, *October 20, 1883.*

“MY VERY DEAR SISTER,—When I left you I little thought a great sorrow was close at hand, and that our dearest Lord would in a few short weeks take your beloved Father to Himself. I know how much you all must feel such a loss, for I know how justly dear he was to you as a tender loving Father. Your poor Mother is the most

to be pitied ; but no, she does not need pity—she can lift up her heart and her cross, and lay them on the most loving and sympathetic of all Hearts ; and from that Heart get strength and consolation. Still nature must have its part, and I am glad it has had the relief of tears. Few Fathers have the consolation of having all their children with them at the last, for I do not consider you as not present,—you, his nun-child were with him, uniting in prayer and love with those who were watching the ebbing life, and most certainly you were in his heart. It was very sweet of the Cardinal to tell your dear Father how much he loved him. It would be a consolation to the dear ones also. ‘Little Mimi’ you say was the help and comfort of all. I hope from this that she is better, and dear Jennie also. Will not this make a great change in her bright happy life? She always seemed to me so very happy. I do not forget my old children, and I shall always be pleased to hear of you and yours, whenever you have time to write. I offered Holy Communion the day after I heard of his death, and have often remembered him since.

“Will you please thank Sister C. Angela for her letter with my love. I shall hope soon to write to her. Now that we are a little more settled, perhaps there will be also a little more time. We have been on the constant move ever since we left England. The summer heat is intense, 170°. To-day we have a hot wind which means something very oppressive ; dry heat, which makes one long for moisture. When the real summer heat comes, people get up in the night and sit in baths ! I can quite understand such a performance. The ‘Miss Kitties’ have not troubled us yet, but the common flies are very numerous, and a large kind of blue-bottle makes plenty of noise. The birds we have seen are mostly sparrows,—plenty of them, but not quite the English sparrow ; and the swallows are larger and heavier. There is also a bird with a sharp note like a mongrel goldfinch, and a few small parrots.

The one kind of butterfly I have seen is a mixture of the Admiral and the Tortoise-shell. A blue pimpernel is a novelty. Most of the trees are 'red gum,' something like the birch, only not so graceful. A few 'Norfolk Island pine-trees' look well,—but one misses the English forest trees. The little gardens around are brilliant with scarlet geraniums.—With very much love and sympathy, ever your devoted sister in Christ. S. M. R. C."

It was not likely that she would lose her interest in St. Mary Church and its people.

GOD ALONE.

J. M. ✠ D. C.

"November 2, 1883.

"VERY REV. AND DEAR FATHER,—You will see that I am troubling you again with enclosures. If you do not object to them, I can more frequently write to you. This will be only a scrap, a really long letter to come soon. I looked out for a letter last mail but it came not—you have been very good in writing so often.

"I suppose the great organ is in 'working order' now. You must tell me if you like it. Now there are so many good voices in the nuns' choir it will make it easier for them to sing with the men, or alone. I hear from S. F. Angela from Stone; she hopes the change will do her good. Do not the poor people miss her very much?

"I hear privately of the proposed endowment of the Church; it is very noble of the Lloyds. I do not know any particulars: whether it is to be now or in the future. It will no doubt be useful, though I rather preferred to be without endowment. I had intended to write to Mrs. W. by this mail, but I had not time for a line to both you and her, so please give my love to her, and thank her for her letters. There is not much news from this

part of the world. I had forgotten to ask after our dear Bishop. Is he really ill, or is there any danger? How did your retreat end? You would be sure to like F. Humphrey. It is most strange to feel so near and yet so far off. It is only when one remembers the length of time before a letter can reach, and the impossibility of seeing any one or getting anything that one feels the distance. The daily life goes on the same and yet how different. All are pretty well. Mary Mayo very well, 'round and rosy;' she is to be received as a postulant on the 8th, the eve of all S.S. of the Order, much to her joy—please tell Mrs. Mayo. Have you anything that would do for a monthly paper, such as '*Catholic Opinion*,' any matter of interest or edification?

S. M. R. C."

GOD ALONE.

J. M. ✠ D. C.

"November 23, 1883.

"As there is still room for a scrap, I put one in to wish you all the blessings of the New Year. Do not forget to pray for the absent. Absent in body, though often present in spirit. We had Benediction immediately after Mass on the Presentation. I thought you would be in your study reading or writing before retiring for the night. I asked our dearest Lord to bless you. Our future still looks most uncertain. Two priests have sent orders for vestments, and wanted by Christmas if possible. I shall try and write to you on Sunday if all is well. Heat intense.—Begging your blessing, ever yours gratefully in Christ,

"S. M. R. C."

"November 13, 1883.—For a week I have not been able to write; my right hand became weak, and I could not make much use of it. Though not quite right, yet I can manage to guide a pen. It might have been caused by the intense heat that suddenly changed to

cold. These changes are common here, and are trying to most,—even to those who have been here some time.

“Our future is still uncertain, and must be for many a long day. Light will come in time. Never did I feel more our entire dependence on the good Providence of God;—as Sister X. says, ‘There is nothing but the Lord.’ Well,—we have Him, and more time for prayer. . . . I am in no hurry to plunge into active work; and not much inclined to begin life again at this end of the world. Suppose everything prospered,—great success! What then? I shall not refuse active work if it comes, and is *suitable*, but at present I have no intention of seeking it.

“*November 28, 1883.*—Sister Z. and I work hard all day at the vestments; or rather, she is painting Christmas Cards, for which there is a great demand, and as we get 3s. each for them, they are worth doing. So it is only in the evening light, which is of short duration, that I have time to write; and sometimes I am too tired, when the evening comes.

“We never have the ‘Bread of the Word of God’ broken to us. Yet we have the ‘Word made Flesh’ very near to us; and it is very sweet to be able to pay little visits; though the angels will not have many steps to count, as we are so constantly passing the Chapel door. It is very like the old Villa; only the folding-doors are always open, and the rooms are perhaps a little more Chapel-like. Sweet as it is to be so near, I would gladly give it up, to see Him more suitably lodged, and more souls coming to adore Him. Shall I ever see a *Model* Church here? It looks impossible: but what is impossible to our poor human weakness is very possible to God, and I do not give up hope. We are going to offer the Novena of the Immaculate Conception for this intention:—that God will give us, and do with us, whatever is most for His own honour and glory. I had almost hoped that He would let us spend more time in Adoration.

It seems so needed. . . . I make no plans till the end of the year, *i.e.*, *the year* thirteen months after our coming. . . . The more I see of Hospital work, the more I see it is unfitted for us. If Miss N. comes, I shall take it as a sign that God wills us to continue; if not, at the end of the year that house will be given up."

These letters are inserted partly to show how necessary it was for them to take up some remunerative employment, but principally to enable the reader to trace the gradual development in the mind of the subject of this memoir of the idea of the "Perpetual Adoration" as the special work for which God had called them out to Australia. The Will of God is most surely known by external circumstances. Interior drawings may often be illusions, but external events are facts ordained or permitted by the Providence of God. Of course they may be misinterpreted, but illusion is not so easy as in the interpretation of interior lights.

"*December 9, 1883.*—We had Exposition yesterday—the Immaculate Conception—from the seven o'clock Mass until Benediction at 5 P.M. The Dean spoke of devotion to the Blessed Sacrament—of our being almost constantly with our Lord—of returning love for Love. Does it mean anything? I have not yet spoken to the Dean of what has been of late so much in my mind. Humanly speaking, we are *not* the Religious for this place. Less of religious life, and more freedom of action is what seems to be required. We have three times offered to visit the sick poor; a list of those to be visited has been promised, but with one exception, nothing has come of it. My impression is that the Dean thinks our work is within.

"*December 23, 1883.*—Again a long pause. Did you

remember your ordination day, the 22nd? I did not forget you, and offered Holy Communion for you. A priest for seventeen years! how much that means. Daily to hold the God of heaven in your hands. How many times you have given Him in Holy Communion! How many souls have been washed in the Precious Blood when the words of absolution were pronounced by you! How many sermons,—the spoken word! Truly the priesthood is an awful and wonderful gift bestowed on man. May our dearest Lord make you a priest after His own Heart! That is, and ever has been my prayer for you. Seldom have I seen you, or thought of you, without those words rising almost naturally from my heart to the heart of our Lord.

“We shall have Midnight Mass. In the quiet of the night, the Word made Flesh will come to us.

“I have been laid up for a few days—a chill—the weather is so changeable, from intense heat to piercing cold. We have a kind elderly doctor, who offered us his services—an Englishman, not a Catholic—but who takes a kindly interest in us. On leaving yesterday he said, ‘Send for me any hour, day or night.’ So our Lord has provided us with a friend, and a useful one. He says I shall not stand this climate, and ought not to have come out. Too late now: and I do not regret the coming; life will not be shorter than God means it to be; and if I can do anything to make Him more honoured in the Sacrament of His Love, I shall be more than repaid for having crossed the ocean. . . . I will tell you what is in my mind. It seems to me that the Community wanted here is one for GOD ALONE—a Community for reparation and adoration. I see and know so little of the Catholics that I cannot judge *what* they are—but commerce with outsiders always makes one sigh—it is difficult to say why, but so it is.

“*January 13, 1884.* Temperature in shade 95°.—I am

truly sorry to hear of the very weak state of our much-loved Bishop. I heard Mass, and offered Holy Communion for him the morning after receiving your letter. It is sad to think he will never pontificate again. The very sight of him in his pontificals did one good; and then the simple touching sermons, going to the hearts of his 'Beloved Children in Jesus Christ!' I intended to have written to him for his birthday, but it is too late now, and I do not know where he will be. If still with you, will you assure him of my most respectful affection and gratitude, and of our prayers. I shall never forget him, nor all his Fatherly kindness.

"The heat is intense. Our thermometer only shows to 125°. It was 102° in the shade at midday, and 125° in the sun, but it might have been more. We are feeling what it is to be missionaries. This morning it was very difficult to swallow the Sacred Host: our mouths were so dry,—the night had been terrible. I thought of the priests who had to duplicate, and could not take anything; some of them till late in the day. It was as much as we could do to wait till breakfast time, we were so exhausted; and it is with difficulty we can eat;—drink?—oh yes! or we could not say Office; our throats are so dry, it is difficult to get the words out.

"To-morrow we begin our 'Advanced School,' to pay the rent, as well as to benefit our neighbours.

"*February 6, 1884.*—What will 1884 bring? who can tell? The good God is everywhere, watching over, and loving all, fitting each back to its burden; and may we not hope preparing a place for us amongst the many mansions, when we shall have been purified, 'yet so as by fire?'

"Here we have many opportunities of carrying out our Lord's advice, '*Qui vult venire post Me,*' &c., for it is a daily denying oneself, and carrying the Cross. I am on duty again as 'Matron.' . . . It seems strange that we

should have come 14,000 miles to see that a few men are properly nursed! Yet that is literally our work. . . . Yet we keep up our spirits, and hope for better times. Our Lord brought us here, and He will know what to do with us.

"February 15.—The Mail has arrived, bringing your long letter about poor Mrs. Chatto's death. Every little detail is of great interest to me. There was so much that was lovable about her.

CHAPTER XI

THIRD AND FOURTH YEARS IN ADELAIDE

Dangerous Illness—Kind Feeling of People of Adelaide—Uncertainty about Future—New House Purchased—Death of the Sub-Prioress—Resolve to remain in Australia—Separation from English Province.

THOSE who are called to accomplish important work for God, are always tried by suffering both of body and mind; and the strength of the spirit is often measured by the weakness of the flesh. It is out of disappointment and apparent failure that God brings forth success,—not the success that attracts the applause of men, but that solid, stable, permanent result which marks success in the work of God. The little Community had had many trials and anxieties since their landing at Adelaide, but a severer trial still was before them in seeing their beloved Mother brought down to the brink of the grave. The accounts of her failing health had become so frequent, and yet her power of recovery seemed so vigorous, that we in England had ceased to think there was real danger, when a telegram came suddenly and startled us all, announcing that she had received the Last Sacraments. Dr. Ullathorne was at St. Mary Church. He was much

affected, and concluded, as we all did, that the next news would be that she was dead. It threw a sad gloom over the Feast of St. Dominic. But when some days had elapsed, and the dreaded telegram did not arrive, we took heart again, and a second telegram said, "slowly improving." In due course accounts came of what seemed a marvellous recovery. How great the danger had been may be gathered from the following letter:—

"*August 9, 1885.*—I think my last letter may have prepared you for the telegram which we sent to Stone last week, saying that dear Mother had received the Last Sacraments. On Wednesday, the 29th of July, she was attacked by what we at first thought was one of her very bad headaches; but, the pain increasing, we sent for Dr. Cawley, who at first said there was no cause of alarm. However, before Sunday (August 2) she had acute inflammation of the brain, and it was considered necessary to give her the Last Sacraments, which she received in the evening, being quite conscious, and holding out her hands herself, and trying to answer. I don't know how we got through that week. Her cries of agony were heartrending, though she never uttered one impatient word through all those long days of terrible pain. It was only, 'Mary, Mary, Mary, my Mother Mary,' 'Lamb of God,' and once something about the sinners of Adelaide, and 'Pray, pray, pray.' Once she said, 'I don't know what I shall do, it is terrible.' Her eyes were perfectly glazed with agony, like those of a dying person. I shall never forget her face, and all the time she was quite conscious. For two or three days we constantly expected her death, and the 'Salve' was sung round her bed twice; and we longed for our Lord to take her. We were making a novena for her to 'Our Lady of

Perpetual Succour,' and on the last day there certainly was an improvement, and Dr. Cawley said she would pull through. He called in another doctor, who quite agreed with his opinion of her. She is now going on well, unable to speak—at least, so as to be easily understood. We think she is conscious, though not able to give many signs of it from weakness, since the pain and fever left her. Two of us sit up with her every night. She cannot be left many minutes alone, night or day."

One happy result of this dangerous illness was to make the Sisters aware of how much their beloved Prioress was appreciated in Adelaide. The letter quoted above adds:—

"Nothing could exceed the kindness of the Bishop and priests. When the Bishop received Mother Sub-Prioress's note, saying dear Mother had received the Last Sacraments, he said it was as if an electric shock had gone through him. He came up at once to see her and pray by her. Then he sent circulars to all the Convents for prayers; 400 children said the Rosary for her on St. Dominic's Day; and he himself came the next day, and said Mass here, and gave her Holy Viaticum, which he has given her leave to receive every day that she was able, and this is such a comfort to her. He has been up three or four times since, besides sending to inquire for her every day. From the first he said she would not die, that her work was not done, and he had hoped that she would work together with him for some years until things were straight, and then they would both go to heaven. All the priests have been so kind, saying Mass for her, and offering to give her Holy Viaticum at any time in the day. The Dean says she is a grand soul; and Father Healy, when Mother Sub-Prioress was expressing her gratitude for the great kindness every one had shown, answered, 'She is worth it all'

"But it is not the Bishop and priests alone, it is every one—Catholics, Jews, Protestants, rich and poor—all seem to think they cannot do enough. Everything the doctor orders, no matter how expensive, as soon as it is known, is sent up; and people come to know if there is anything they can do. One Protestant, a very nice lady from Devonshire, who had just sent her little girl to school, but who had never seen Mother, asked if she might give some of the music-lessons (she is a very good musician), and even offered to take the school herself. This is only one instance out of many. This has taken us all by surprise, and our hearts have warmed towards the colonials for ever, I think. If Mother had worked among them for ten years instead of two, they could hardly have shown more feeling. We have had letters from the Sisters of Mercy, and from the Dominican nuns of West Terrace. I think our Lord will hear all the prayers that have been said, and I cannot help feeling sure that many are also being said for her now in England.

"The kindness of the people has been greater than we could possibly have imagined. They at once sent champagne, brandy, chicken, cream, and jellies; and when they found she was only to take milk and broth, every one who had a cow sent milk, and we had such a quantity that we did not know what to do with it. Others sent chicken-broth, which was very useful. . . . It was a merciful providence that the illness came in the winter, and not in the summer; and we found this house such a convenience, having all the offices so close together, and no stairs. We have all had to be as quiet as possible, like mice; no bells have been rung for Office or anything else. When the lady who lives next door heard all the bells cease she said she knew Mother Prioress must be very ill, and she immediately removed a cock, which she thought might disturb her by his crowing. Mother Prioress missed the cock, and she was quite touched by the lady's kindness."

A letter from another Sister, dated August 23, says, "Thank God she is out of danger now." This letter states that after she received the Last Sacraments she became unconscious on the 2nd of August. The pain continued more or less until the 11th, and she began to return to consciousness on the 15th. The following letter shows how slow the recovery was:—

"*September 2, 1885.*—She has now been in bed nearly six weeks. If she does pull through this illness, I am afraid her recovery will be very slow, and we dread to look forward to the future, knowing all the anxiety before her. The doctor told us during her illness that he could not account for the violent pain continuing so long, unless there was worry and anxiety; and he asked if she had had any letters, or anything to upset her, and we could not deny that she had one letter a few days before she was taken ill, which we think hastened the attack. . . . Many and many times during the past two years we have said, 'How can Mother stand all this?' and we have dreaded what has happened now. Mother Sub-Prioress, Sister M. Erminilda, has over and over again said it was more than she or any one could bear. . . .

"*September 20.*—She is recovering slowly, *very* slowly. Every day she gets out of bed, and lies on a couch in her room for some hours. Twice she has crept into the garden, leaning on two of us, just for a few minutes. She was glad enough to lie down again when she came in. . . . Dear old Mother! I can see nothing but suffering before her. . . . The doctor and the Bishop both have ordered her to go to the sea for change, and it seems to be the only chance she has. She is going to Glenelg on Friday. It is about eight miles from here. Sister F. P. is going with her, and will stay at least ten days, during the Christmas holidays, and then another will take her place. Father Unsworth, the

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priest at Glenelg, is a great friend of dear Mother's, and he is sure to look after her, and see that the lodgings are good. The Bishop, too, will be there about the same time. Mother Sub-Prioress and one of us are going to drive to Glenelg on Tuesday, in Mrs. MacLean's carriage, to see about the rooms.

"Dear Mother would be glad if you would thank all those who have prayed for her. She was quite touched by L.'s kind letter, and sends her special love."

They went to Glenelg for a fortnight, and it did Mother Rose Columba so much good that on the first Sunday she was there she was able to go to Mass, and to walk down to the beach almost every day. Father Unsworth was very kind, and interested them much by relating some of his adventures in the bush during his missionary rides of sometimes 400 miles in a week.

Father Unsworth has now for several years been working in the diocese of Plymouth, and for a time was stationed at St. Mary Church. His estimate of Mother Rose Columba's early difficulties and indomitable spirit may be gathered from the following words:—

"Such an unpropitious beginning did not daunt the stout heart of the Rev. Mother. She saw there was much good to be done; so her mind was at once made up to settle down in the land of her adoption, and, with the aid of her faithful Community, do what she could. She had a great devotion to the Blessed Sacrament, great reverence for the priestly character, and for everything that related to the Altar, and an ardent zeal for souls. She was very clear-headed and practical, but would never act without consultation. She was open to advice, even from the humblest

of the Community. She was straightforward, but never offensive, and her sway over her subjects was as gentle as it was firm. Hence, she invited their confidence to such an extent that she was regarded more in the light of a mother than a Superior. She was remarkably considerate towards the hard-worked priests of the Mission. She knew their little wants almost by intuition, and would provide for them before being asked. Though a fervent Religious, she was never exacting, and was always more ready to sacrifice what a nun most dearly prizes, than to enjoy them at the expense of the comfort and peace of the often worn-out and jaded pastor."

The first letter after her illness from Mother Rose Columba is dated October 19, 1885:—

[*Private.*]

"I accomplished my first letter on Saturday to Mother Provincial, and now I must thank you for all the prayers you have said for me, and for your letter.

"I had been feeling far from well for a long time, and the day I added with much difficulty the pencilled words to my last letter I was really very ill, though up and about. I had told the doctor some time before that I feared for my head. He said, very seriously, 'Your heart will give way before your head—do you know that?' My heart certainly was weaker; but the last time I said Office I had to *spell* the words to get it finished, and that made me know that something was wrong. Thank God I was conscious when I received the Last Sacraments on August 2nd, but I had been unconscious till that afternoon and evening; and I do not remember anything *clearly* until Our Lady's Assumption, when I seemed to awake from a long dream, or return from a visit to a distant land. I knew I had received the Last Sacraments, and that I was near death. The thought of going to God was more in my mind than going to judg-

ment—I mean when it seemed to me when I was in a distant land, and that the offer was given to me by some one (I do not know *who* that some one was, but I think an angel) of either dying now, which seemed the most pleasant, or of living on and working for God. I seemed to see clearly what that work was—to try to make God more known and loved. Of course I said I would do whatever was most for the glory of God, and then I seemed to awake.

“I have not said this to any one, as it might have been only a part of the wanderings, but it seemed very real at the time. I cannot say I had any fears. Perhaps I was too unconscious. I thought it strange when Sister M. Erminilda asked me if I had better not receive the Last Sacraments. I said, ‘Does the doctor think I am in danger?’ ‘Yes.’ I knew two doctors had been. I said, ‘Then send for the Dean.’ It was strange I always knew the Dean or any priest, and the doctor, though I do not remember their visits. The Dean said I responded to all the prayers, yet I did not know when he said them. Every one has been most kind. I will not say anything about the Community. They were quite resigned; and some even prayed that I might die, I was in such agonies of pain. God knows best. . . . If God had His designs in bringing us here, which the Bishop and priests seemed to think, what do the *means* matter? We have had much to suffer, much to contend with. If God is glorified, why should we dwell on the trials? He has been very merciful to us.”

The reasons for keeping “private” the foregoing letter have now ceased to exist, and it is published because it supplies a key to the change that from this illness seems to have come over the mind of the subject of this Memoir as to her own work and path of duty. There was still a certain amount of uncer-

tainty, and the difficulties had by no means disappeared; but it seemed to be clear to her that it was the Will of God that she should remain in Adelaide, that her life had been given back to her that she might do a special work there, and that that work was to be partly higher education, but principally to live a life of prayer and reparation, and to gather around her those who would devote themselves to the same life of sacrifice. The question of remaining in Australia had to be decided before the summer of 1886, and it was evidently already occupying the thoughts of the Community. Another part of the same letter shows that the time of convalescence was not spent idly:—

“*October 22.*—An address has to be illuminated for the Cardinal. It is from the *Hibernian* Society, and ‘Irish emblems’ were requested. It has been a troublesome piece of work—not that I have done work, but I had to design and superintend. Sister Z. is at School most of the day, but on her the execution mostly depends. We were entreated to undertake another address from the laity, but that was impossible. His Eminence is expected next week.”

Further on she says:—

“*October 27.*—Hot wind and hotter sun. I have not been good for much the last two days. The doctor was here yesterday—not sent for. I cannot say how kind he has been. The Bishop met him here while I was ill, and was much touched by his extraordinary kindness, saying he might be a father or a brother. . . . If the opinion of the priests do not suffice, a Catholic lawyer called a few days since. Speaking of a relative of his, who was thinking of entering a Convent in England, he said, ‘I wish she would

come out here, where nuns are required for *Higher Education*.' It is impossible to understand the state of affairs here unless they are seen and *felt*. . . . I cannot help hoping that our Lord will send some one in His own good time. . . . God alone has taken care of us so far, and why should we doubt Him? The marvellous sympathy in words and deeds shown by so many here, who were comparative strangers, during my illness, is one more proof of His care. He has blessed the School, or we could not pay our way; and it was He who made the priests take the interest they have done in us. A week or two since I asked one of the priests confidentially what he thought of our future. He knows our position, and the affairs of the Diocese. He said, 'I consider it would be a positive injury to religion if you were to leave.' His reasons for so saying were somewhat flattering, so I need not repeat them. All agree—I mean priests who know us—in saying, 'Go on as you are doing,' *i.e.*, keep to Higher and Middle Schools. The coming Council and its decisions will, I think, have something to do with our future. Cardinal Moran is coming out with full powers, 'to be Pope in Australia,' I heard it said. Pray that we may do God's will, and what is most for His glory.

"*December* 11, 1885.—Perhaps you have heard that I was forbidden 'all mental exertion' for some little time, as my head began to ache again. This will account for a letter, and then silence.

"You will think it strange, perhaps, that we six have not formally made up our minds yet whether to remain or return. If we asked advice *here*, the answer would be, Remain. I get sometimes very, very weary—wearied of many things. . . . The Bishop has been very kind to us, and seems to look to us to do something to better the state of things. What? A young, zealous, pious priest called a little while since, and said afterwards, 'These people teach you to work for God alone.' At another time I said to the same priest;

'We can do but little.' He replied, 'If you say your Office, and take care of your chapel, you will be doing a great work, even if you did not teach your school.' We get little hints from England about our 'enclosed life.' *Six* go to School every day, and are consequently on the road four times a day! Not quite *enclosure*! We cannot *insist* on visiting the people. When the priest tells us we 'should be doing more harm than good,' surely the priest ought to know. A few attempts at 'Apostolicity' have been singularly unfruitful, as if Our Lord meant to show us that that was not the work He required, whilst the school has been singularly blessed. Our only desire is to do God's holy Will, whatever it may be. You will help us by praying that we may know and do the Will of God. Yesterday I was not well, and had to leave the Chapel before I had finished meditation. Not wishing to lose time, I took up the 'Imitation,' said a prayer, and opened it at Book iii., ch. 47: 'That all grievous things are to be endured for life everlasting.' Every word seemed to answer thoughts that had been passing in my mind.

"I had thought of asking you whether to remain, or go back to England. . . . Without being conceited, I do not think the young Community could do without some one who has had a little experience.

"Certainly, there is not anything naturally attractive to Religious in Australia—the difficulty of getting postulants, suitable ones, and the wearing struggle to get our living and to keep a house over our heads. We must have two houses if a School is to be kept. A School is our only way of doing good, and almost our only way of getting a living. A little extra work comes in, which we are glad to get, as it brings us a few pounds; but it has to be done under difficulties. The money trials, which I have had to struggle with for more than five-and-twenty years, I little expected when I entered Religion. It is a good way of *feeling* one's Vow of Poverty. Many and many have been our difficulties

and trials here—so many that I thought they would have been considered sufficient. . . . The Lord thought otherwise.

“*Christmas Eve*, 1885.—Your letter and your gift arrived just in time for Christmas. God reward you for both! We have been reading ‘The Expectation’ from Father Cole-ridge’s ‘The Nine Months’ this afternoon; so you see we have soon made use of the book.

“It seemed to me that Christmas Eve was a very fitting night to ask you about my future. If I remain here, I would rather it was an act of obedience than my own choice. You said, ‘Go.’ Will you say, ‘Stay where you are?’ As I have often said something about our surroundings, I think you know them. Once, and once only, and that lately, I did think of the possibility of a return. I was in the Chapel at the time, and it seemed to me that Our Lord reproached me for it. Mere supposition it might have been. We have here every means of sanctification—‘GOD ALONE’—what more can we want? And it is as near to heaven from Australia as from England. I think we have been able to do some little good already.

“*January* 1886.—We have just succeeded in buying another house without money! It was the very house we wanted, next to ours, but was neither for sale nor to be rented. St. Joseph had the management, and we have the house. Of course we have had to borrow the money, £2050, and to pay interest for it. A rather better house than this, but we have got it for £450 less. The times are bad; this house was considered a good bargain at the time, this new one a better. Our friend the doctor put us in the way of ‘doing business.’ You must please pray that the School may prosper, and the health of the Community may keep sufficiently good. You see we depend entirely on Almighty God; and thus prayer, and above all the Holy Sacrifice, is the greatest boon you can confer upon us. We have to be very careful of every penny; for what is abso-

lutely necessary costs double what it does in England, and in a hot climate more is needed. . . . There is much, very much, I could say to you, but I shall not be able to do so this mail.

"The heat has been intense, 125° in the shade, hotter than it has been known for some years.

"*January 26, 1886.—P.S.*—I have had to miss many mails. We found the house just purchased so dirty that we set to work and *cleaned* it from front to back; and now it is thoroughly done, and fitted for the School. It took some time, and was hard work; the weather, too, was more than warm, but I do not think it has done us any harm. We could not afford a charwoman. Mother Sub-Prioress was very poorly, and Sister M. R. attended to her, so we were two short. . . . I do not expect any help from the English Province. . . . I think you know that I did not wish any one to come for my sake. Nor will I *ask* any one to remain; all are free, and I often remind them that they are so. It must be 'GOD ALONE.' . . . The upper classes have souls, and are less easily got at than are those of the poor, so more merit. It is far *easier* to teach poor than rich, and, in some cases, *pleasanter* as well. I say again, it is only for God's sake that any Religious must come to Australia. Excitement will not wear; besides, there is not any here—in our Convent, I mean—plenty outside!

"*February 5, 1886.*—Although it is not long since my last letter was sent off, yet letters are so long getting under weigh that I do not suppose this will reach you *too* soon. It is pleasant to have a chat on paper, and as I have not returned to regular school duties, I have a little free time. I have just returned from taking Sister M. Erminilda into the country. She has not been well, and the doctor ordered us both out of town for a fortnight; but she seemed so anxious to return that I brought her back at the end of a week, and I shall not go to school until Monday. She is not quite well yet.

"The little I have seen of a country township does not make me change my opinion. The Church was poor, but carefully kept. The Blessed Sacrament is reserved in a safe in the wall of the little sanctuary. The lamp is burning to tell of the Divine Presence; but the sense of the Divine Solitude struck me very much. Every one busy about his or her own affairs. The priest has the care of three Missions, so he has enough to do."

I think I had made some remarks to the effect that their vocation was not to an enclosed Order, but an active one; and that Mother Margaret had not wished her nuns to be enclosed. Hence she replies:—

"*Enclosure.*—No probability of that at present. The danger here is not enclosure, but overmuch active work. Bishop Ullathorne must know this far better than I do.

"*Mother Margaret.*—What will you say to the following fact? Just before our dear Mother left England for Rome, she called me into her private room, told me she was going to Rome about the affairs of the Community, and added, 'I do not know what turn things may take; but would you not rather be enclosed than cease to be a Dominican?' Of course I said I would. So you see the possibility of enclosure was in our Mother's mind. I remember the fact well, for I was only a junior, and felt highly honoured by our Mother's caring to know what I thought. Again, if you read our Mother's 'Life,' you may see how much she insisted upon—humble, laborious work always—but more and more about the direct worship of God, and less of *work*.

"We have plenty of work—no one can deny that—and humble and laborious too. During the holidays and the intensely hot weather we cleaned two moderate-sized houses—*walls*, as well as paint and floors in one house; for the

house we bought was very dirty, and the one we left was to have its Christmas cleaning, besides this house. We could not afford to hire any one, and we are doing without a school servant this quarter; so we set to work and did all ourselves. If this is not humble and laborious I do not know what is. And all was done with such a willing, cheerful spirit; yet, as I said before, it was neither easy nor pleasant work, in the ordinary sense of the term.

“*February* 9.—Since I commenced this a priest called, who has always been very friendly towards us. We were talking of our future. ‘If you want to do any good here,’ he said, ‘keep within.’ And again, ‘I know some who have their eyes on this Community, and are attracted to it, because you keep yourselves quiet, and do not appear in public.’ . . . The Bishop would be terribly disappointed if we did return. This I know. And he has great hopes of this Community, ‘Because it was founded in the Cross, and in Poverty.’

“My fear for the future here is not the climate, not the want of work, but, as I said before, *over* work. The spirit here is *Do*. . . . You would need to be here to know why I have such a horror of an over-active life. I should not like to die, and leave a Community exposed to the dangers of it. . . . There is only One in whom we can confide, and our hopes are in Him. We seem entirely thrown on His Providence, and He can and will help. But for God’s mercy where should we be to-day? . . . Several of the priests have been very kind, but they have not anything in their power. They give us their sympathy, and would help if they could. . . . But our Lord overrules all, and every one.

“*March* 18.—The future is still uncertain, and I seem not to have any particular views or interests in the future. It is better—is it not?—to live in the present, and we may say, ‘Sufficient unto the day is the burden thereof.’ The Cross was pressing rather heavily on the day we kept

Blessed Henry Suso, and the Gospel spoke on that day. I sometimes feel that there is no rest but on the Heart of Jesus, no repose but in His wounded Side. To have Him so near has been no small boon. I think most, if not all, feel that the Chapel is our one comfort, and our one hope is in prayer.

“*March 21.*—A priest called, and remained some little while. I asked him if we were to go back? ‘Oh no! Truly a bright crown might be won if all opportunities were made use of.’ But enough of ourselves. How are you, in the midst of your numerous cares? . . .

“*July 5, 1886.*—Our life here is most quiet; we rarely see any one. We have not many friends. I expect the doctor, who is kindness itself. The Bishop, too, is most kind; and so are the few priests that we know, though they seldom call. They have plenty to do with their respective flocks. If any one thinks of coming here, please impress upon them only to expect a very quiet life—no success, no excitement. We must be content to be laid in the trenches, and not seen. I am content only to begin, and not to expect to see the Community flourish. Yet I do think our Lord is looking after us and helping us. Sister X. said only this morning, ‘Perhaps our Lord brought us to Australia to make us pray.’ I like to think that He made use of all things for His own wise ends.

[*Finished by Sister X.*]

“Dear Mother was laid up yesterday with an attack of the heart, and could not write. She desired me to finish it for her. She is better to-day, but altogether she has been but poorly for the last month. We thought it was pleurisy at first, but that seems doubtful now, please God. I hope the pain in her side will not return again. She has anxiety enough just now to make her ill; but we hope that, after August, when everything is finally settled, things will be better. Dear Sister M. Erminilda got very nicely out of

all her difficulties, and went away to the Lord, smiling very comfortably. But, never mind, dear old Mother's time will come some day."

The time for the final decision as to whether they would stay in Australia was fast approaching, and some of the Sisters had made up their minds to return to England, when an event occurred in the Community which decided them all. Mother Mary Erminilda Joyce, the Sub-Prioress, had been taken ill in January, as was mentioned by Mother Rose Columba in her letter of February 5. The change of air did not restore her to complete health, and soon after her return to Adelaide she began to grow weaker, though very gradually. It was, however, the beginning of the end, and after being confined to her bed for three weeks she passed away. One of the Sisters, in a letter dated April 18, thus describes her last moments:—

"Just a fortnight before her death the doctor seemed seriously alarmed, and she received the Last Sacraments. We were all there; and though it seemed a wise precaution to give them, yet there was no appearance of death about her then, and she rallied considerably afterwards, and was able to take a good deal of nourishment. Gradually, however, it became evident that she was really getting worse, and Mother Prioress devoted her time and energy to nursing her night and day, with the assistance that was necessary, for she could not be left. Still there was no look of death. She herself felt that she could not recover, and made a very special preparation for Holy Communion on the night before her last Sunday. She said (I suppose when she was wandering a little) that St. Dominic, St. Vincent Ferrar, and the two St. Agnes's were coming—I think she meant—to

her death. On the night between Monday and Tuesday Mother Prioress noticed a very decided change, and when the doctor came he said she was sinking. The Bishop was exceedingly kind, and came to see her on Tuesday afternoon, and said Mass in our Chapel on Wednesday morning. By that time she was unconscious, or nearly so, and a little before two in the afternoon Mother Prioress sent for us all to say the prayers for a departing soul. Before we had time to finish the laboured breathing had ceased; then two short gasps, and all was over. We went at once to the Choir to say the Psalms prescribed in the Processionale, and tried to keep up the Psalter as well as our limited numbers would allow. . . . Our dear Sister looked very sweet and peaceful, and those who had been her children in the School begged to be allowed to see her."

The Bishop and priests did all in their power to console the bereaved Community. His Lordship telegraphed to many priests to say Mass for the soul of the departed Sister, and he sang a pontifical Requiem the next day in the Convent Chapel, at which sixteen priests assisted. The funeral took place at 4 P.M., and the priests insisted upon carrying the body to the hearse on their own shoulders. The children in the School carried to the Cemetery wreaths and crosses of white flowers, and the Bishop himself performed the last rites.

This grave in the Adelaide Cemetery seemed to have a strange attractive power, and helped to decide the minds of some who, "mindful of the country from whence they came out, might have had the opportunity to have returned." One by one, they all signified to their Superiors in England their determination to

remain in Adelaide. The Sister who wrote the letter quoted above concludes it by saying:—

“One trusts that if our Lord wills to have one of our number to praise Him in heaven, He will preserve those whom He means to work for Him in carrying out this Foundation on earth.”

The thoughts of the subject of this Memoir on the matter may be gathered from the following letter:—

“*May 14, 1886.*—So you say, ‘Stay where you are.’ I reply, ‘Amen.’ It is a venture of Faith; but if the Lord is not to be trusted, who is? And I do trust He will be glorified, either by success or failure, as He knows best. There are so many signs of His watchful Providence that it would be wrong to doubt. What is it Father Faber says?

‘To doubt would be disloyalty,
To falter would be sin,’

or some such words.

“I object to the word ‘exile.’ ‘*Domini est terra,*’ so into exile we cannot go, though we may be transported! . . . When I told the Dean that I had decided to stay, he said, ‘My child, I believe you have done the will of God. As far as I have light, I believe this Community may do much for the glory of God, and that it has a great future before it. You may not live to see it. You may have a hard life before you; but always say, Welcome be the Will of God. Had you decided to return, I could not have said you were doing God’s Will.’

“How many times have I had occasion to say, ‘Welcome be the Will of God’? and I *have* said it, sooner or later.

“I told the doctor. He utterly disapproves, and has done his best to make me change my mind. I told him, because from the first he said I ought not to have come, and wanted me to go back long ago. However, he has

promised to look after me as long as he is here, though he says *I ought to be in South Devon*. No. It is very doubtful whether I shall ever see South Devon again."

There was reason for the foreboding expressed in these last words. A letter of the same date from one of the Sisters says :—

"We were alarmed about her last week, as she had an attack of pleurisy, which came on suddenly during the evening recreation. The pain was very violent during the first part of the night; but linseed poultices being kept constantly applied, she was easier in the morning. She is now about again; but, since the great heat of last summer, she seems more than ever susceptible of cold, which makes us anxious about her."

The same letter speaks of the decision to remain.

"It seems pretty certain that most of us will do so. It requires a very large act of faith in the Providence of God to stay here without any human support; but I cannot help thinking that, if we do so, our Lord will feel obliged to look after us; for all we wish in remaining in this country is to do His Will. . . . I hope therefore that I am doing God's Will by choosing to stay in Australia."

Before August all the Sisters had made up their minds to remain in Australia, and had written to the Superiors in England to that effect. An appeal had been made, after the death of Sister Mary Erminilda, for two more Sisters to be sent out from Stone; but, after much consideration, Bishop Ullathorne decided that none could be allowed to go.

Thursday, August 26, was the third anniversary of

their landing at Adelaide. By their determination to remain, on that day their connection with the English Province was severed. Their ecclesiastical position is defined by the following letter of Bishop Ullathorne:—

“MY DEAR MOTHER PROVINCIAL,—You are quite correct. The Sisters at Adelaide, by the fact of their separation from the Province of St. Catherine of Siena, which is limited to England, Wales, and Scotland, by the decree of Propaganda, fall under the common law (of the Church), are *ipso jure* the subjects of the Bishop of Adelaide. The agreement with the Bishop of Adelaide fixed the time of their transfer; the General of the Order left the arrangement in his letter to us; and as the Sisters have decided to remain, that act determines both the legal separation of the Adelaide Sisters, and also the transfer of their obedience to the Bishop of Adelaide. You can enclose this letter to them, if you think well to do so. I pray God to bless you, and remain, &c.,

✠ W. B. U.”

The wrench of the separation could not but be severely felt by all the Community, although it was a kind of relief when all was over, when the time for deliberation and hesitation had passed, and the little Community had to face the difficulties of their position with no support from home, and no hope except in the never-failing Providence of God. That good Providence had already raised them up a friend in the holy Bishop of Adelaide. One of the Sisters remarks on the letter of Dr. Ullathorne, given above:—

“If we have lost one Father, I think our Lord has given us another in the Bishop here. Nothing can be kinder than he is. . . . He is very holy too: he has had trouble

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enough to make him so. . . . If we have learned nothing else since we came to Australia, I think we have all learned to pray. There is no help for it ; we are literally forced to it, and have to keep clinging close to our Lord, and to leave Him no peace. We often say, He must be tired of us, like the widow and the unjust judge in the Gospel. And though it sometimes seems as if our Lord did not hear us, and we say amongst ourselves that there never was a more forlorn Community, yet at other times He seems so near, and the picture of the Sacred Heart over the Altar seems to say, 'Why are you fearful when I am here?' And it is so sweet to feel really and truly that we have only Him to look to, and that if He does not help us, we have no one else to turn to."

This increased attraction to prayer, which comes out so frequently in their letters, was already disposing the minds of the Sisters to the great work to which God was calling them. One of them writes of the severance from the English Province :—

"I cannot help thinking that this also has been providentially arranged. For certainly our dear Mother has been drawn, ever since our arrival, to desire for us a more retired life than we should have had in England ; and, as we are now simply Nuns of the Third Order of St. Dominic, and not Nuns of the Congregation of St. Catherine, there seems no reason why we should not devote ourselves more to making Reparation to our Lord, Who is so forgotten and neglected, than to those exterior works of charity which are well cared for. At any rate, this seems rather what God's Providence is leading us to, and we desire only to follow the indications of His Will."

How that Will was clearly manifested to them will appear in the following chapter.

CHAPTER XII

1886-1888

THE PREPARATION FOR THE PERPETUAL ADORATION—LIGHT AT LAST

THE first official act of the Community, now launched on its new phase of existence, was to elect, or rather re-elect, its Prioress. This election was fixed by the Bishop for the 30th of August, the feast of St. Rose of Lima. The Bishop himself said the Mass, and proceeded to the election afterwards, with Dean Kennedy and Father Unsworth as assistants. The Bishop then confirmed the election, and on October 5th came again with the same priests and installed her, and sang the *Te Deum*.

The pain of the separation from the Congregation had been much softened by many kind assurances of a continuance of mutual prayer and sisterly interest, and especially by the promise that those who had gone forth from the Community in England should, at their death, receive exactly the same special suffrages, and share in the prayers and Masses, as if they had remained in the Congregation at home. The immediate prospect was, however, not very bright. Though they

had made up their minds to remain in Adelaide, the special work for which God had called them was not as yet clearly manifested; the lack of Postulants, and often the want of means, pressed constantly upon them. Sometimes they felt much discouraged, and a trace of this finds expression in some of Mother Rose Columba's letters. She had not only to keep up her own brave spirit under the weight of a trying climate, and more and more failing health, but she had also to be the support of every member of her Community in the various exterior and interior trials of each. But "strength is made perfect in infirmity," and it will be useful and instructive to future Sisters of St. Dominic at North Adelaide to recall the pain and sorrows in which the foundations of their Community were laid. All through her life Mother Rose Columba never allowed external circumstances really to stop her course. If she was thwarted, or even stopped short in one direction, she did not give up, but at once looked out for some other line in which she could discern the directing hand of God. One of the Sisters writes:—

"*September 19, 1886.*—We are terribly short of hands, both for the School and for the Office. If those in the School get ill for even a day or two, they have to go, though only fit to be in bed, as there is no one to take their place. What should we do, if they were to get a real illness? Some days ago, every one had bad colds and sore throats all at once; and there were only two or three who could make any sound at all in reciting the Office."

The sudden changes in the climate must have been very trying.

"Yesterday burning hot, to-day cold enough for a fire. Until ten this morning, the wind was hot with clouds of dust and sand; after that, the rain came down in torrents.

"We are doing a good deal in the garden now, when the children are gone, and there is no pressing work; nearly the whole Community turn out to weed, plant, and water. The latter operation has sometimes to be performed with the can in one hand and umbrella in the other. The sun is so powerful that we cannot go to the end of the garden, small as it is, without covering our heads to keep off sunstroke, even early in the morning. Though we have had weeks of rain, coming down in floods, the ground looks dry, as if it had not rained for ages. . . . The weeds shoot up so fast, they are sometimes three or four feet high. The geraniums grow into bushes,—indeed everything you put into the ground grows,—seeds sow themselves, and flowers spring up where you least expect them.

"When dear Mother is well enough, she also helps, and is making the bare walls and ugly Colonial boardings look pretty with creepers. Opposite the back door is what we call her garden. When we first came, there was an ugly bare cow-shed and fowl-house. Now they are covered with plumbago, geraniums and arums, with creepers from the Fiji Islands. There is a narrow strip of ground, and another bare wall just outside the Chapel windows. That is being planted, and will look pretty soon,—we call it St. Anthony's Alley. Old Mr. Q. continues to patronise us, and works in his spare time; but when he gives us the whole day, we have, of course, to give him the eight shillings, so that the more we can do for ourselves the better. He told dear Mother a day or two ago, that the

front and back gardens were a credit to her, and that we had more flowers than any one. 'You ladies,' he added, 'know something, and are willing to learn.'

Amid all her occupations and anxieties Mother Rose Columba never forgot her friends at home. The Mrs. Hope mentioned in the following letters was the authoress of "Early Martyrs," "The Conversion of the Teutonic Races," &c., who lived at St. Mary Church:—

"DOMINICAN CONVENT, N.A.S.A.,
October 2, 1886.

"This is the last day of the Michaelmas holidays; a week, and we begin School again on Monday. . . . Until this last week I have written very little for more than a year. I like to help in the School as much as I can, and then I felt unequal to more exertion, choir duties, of course, coming first. . . . My love, please, to Mrs. Hope. She told me not to write, and I have taken her at her word, but I do not think less about her for all that, waiting so peacefully for the 'glad to-morrow.' That glad to-morrow which we all hope for, and yet which often seems so far off. Yet He will surely come on that glad day—one is tempted sometimes to say, When? Do not think I am in a hurry to die—I am willing to wait God's time.

"October 13, 1886.—Give my love, please, to Mrs. Hope. Do you go to her every Saturday, as of old? How peacefully she lies by her window, looking on the sunlit lawn, and so near the Church! Remember me, too, to all inquiring friends. I was so pleased to hear of Mary Ann Lane's happy death. Poor child! How much she must have suffered, and now she is reaping her reward, and, better still, fulfilling her eternal destiny. May we all meet some day and join in the never-ending song of praise. There no misunderstandings will ever enter, to dim by

their shadows the perfect joy of those who are admitted to the marriage feast of the Lamb. May we, dear Father, be of that happy number!

"November 5, 1886.—I am putting in a line (if the letter will take it) to wish you all Christmas blessings. We will leave the joys till the next world; eternity will be long enough to enjoy ourselves, but not too long to praise the goodness of God. What a life it will be, for ever with the Blessed Mother and the Angels and Saints adoring the Word made Flesh! It makes one feel how unworthy one is for such an end, and how really little it matters what men think of us! . . . We are greatly interested in Father Kenelm Vaughan's Work. We are going to hang up the little pictures in our cells to remind us to unite in his intention. When the Bishop comes, I will give him the letter to the American Bishops. I am sure he will like to know about it. He has a great devotion to the '*Most Holy*,' the words he always uses when speaking of our dear Lord in His Sacramental Presence. . . . His Lordship has given us a beautiful picture. . . . Sister A. J. is writing for me. I was rather bad yesterday; but to-day I have only a little difficulty in breathing. I hope to be up to-morrow. Please always remember me most respectfully to the Bishop of Plymouth, and tell him as much as you think well of our affairs. Father A. advises us to write to the General. We have done so for his Jubilee by this mail. I will try and get the Bishop also to write."

The picture mentioned above was a beautiful oil-painting of "Our Lord and St. Catherine of Siena," which one of the Sisters had seen at another Convent, and had prayed that they might have one like it. They were therefore greatly delighted when it came. It was in a massive gilt frame about six feet high.

When the letter of November 5th was written Mother

Rose Columba was suffering from an attack of the heart, which much alarmed the Community. They were still in a condition of uncertainty as to their future work. Sometimes for a moment a glimpse of it seemed to flash upon them, and then again all would be perplexity. This may be seen in the next two letters:—

“November 26.—I like to think that our dear Lord intended the Foundation, and permitted these things. I do not regret having come, though we have been through much, and our future is, humanly speaking, still a blank. We can only pray to know and do God’s Will. Perhaps the very absence of all that would be naturally desirable makes the sense of God’s Presence and the desire of closer union with Him all the more forcible. We are very grateful for daily Mass and frequent Benedictions. There is so much that one would like to see different, and the sense of helplessness, the impossibility of righting matters oneself, that one is driven to pray on.”

The vision of their future work was becoming more clearly defined.

“December 8, 1886.—We have received a lay postulant, recommended to us by the Jesuit Fathers. . . . ——— wishes us to have the care of a Chapel which is to be built in Lower North Adelaide. . . . Where is the Convent to be? I am sure it would not do here for nuns to have a public Church. It would not be liked by priest or people. I may be wrong, but I do not think *we* can do much in that way. A pretty, well-kept Chapel of our own, with a Tribune, in which a few might assist at Benediction, or come to visit our Lord, is what I should desire. . . . The Dean was amused at the Church being offered to us: ‘I should not like to refuse the nuns anything, but I should refuse them that.’ . . . We are now eleven. It is some

consolation to think that four are now consecrated to Him, who would not have been had we not come here. All like saying their prayers, and the Chapel is not often empty. X. told me she had given out our possibility of enclosure! She thinks we had better advertise, &c., and said, 'I was going to say, you trust too much to the Lord'!!! Almost the same was said to me when I first went to St. Mary Church. Yet I think it answered.

"*December 26.*—The heat is intense, and dear Mother is 'done up;' she has asked me (Sister A. J.) to finish her letter for her. . . . She has had too much to do in the School, especially during the last four weeks, and is feeling it now, but we are only too thankful to see her about. She did the Crib, which seems prettier every year, and also most of the vases for the Altar—not all on the same day, however; she is obliged to sit down for the short time she is doing them. At St. Mary Church, how often she used to stand the whole day long, but now very little exhausts her. But we can never expect her to be as strong again, and are only too glad when she is not in bed and in pain.

"Thank you so much for the charcoal and cruets; I am quite set up now for a long time. . . . We had Midnight Mass as usual. I don't think I ever saw the Chapel look so rich. There were a great many red gladiolas on the Altar in the vases, and Mrs. G., the mother of Ivy and Olive, sent us a quantity of beautiful fan-shaped palms, which looked very handsome behind the Altar, against the light-grey wall. But the Crib is the prettiest of all. It is like that at St. Mary Church, only small, of course. The heat was so great that we were obliged to take all the back candles off the Altar in the afternoon on Christmas Eve, and put them down in a little underground larder, the only cool spot to be found, to try to get them straight and hard for the Midnight Mass. They were a new set we had only just put up, and an inch and a half-quarter in diameter. It is very difficult to keep any candles on the Altar in this heat."

"January 17, 1887.—The Christmas vacation is nearly at an end, and not yet a letter to you. . . . I suppose you have had your usual Christmas doings. We had Midnight Mass and Holy Communion, and a happy Christmas Day, though the heat on the eve, the day itself, and St. Stephen's was intense. Our inconveniences were nothing in comparison to what the priests have to suffer. Most have to duplicate, and to go to some distant Chapel for the second Mass. The priests' life here is hard, and dangers many. Yet one rarely hears of any scandal. The priests in country places require especial help; they must, to a great extent, be left to their own conscience, and there is everything to pull them down. The Bishop often has some to the city, and there is a Clergy Retreat every year. But you have to be here to know what the atmosphere is—I mean, of course, the general atmosphere. We have been most edified by the clergy generally.

"The Redemptorists have been giving a Mission about 250 miles from hence. The Bishop told me he hoped to get them for a Mission in Adelaide some time this year. Perhaps Father Vaughan will come. Connected with the Redemptorists, I must tell you of a Protestant Deaconesses' Home, which was founded in Melbourne, and a Miss F. brought from England or Scotland to superintend. Visitors were invited to call on Miss F.; but when they arrived, they had to hear that Miss F. had become a Catholic. The Redemptorists had given a Mission in Melbourne, which Miss F. attended, and then begged to be received."

"February 11, 1887.—It seems strange to write Easter congratulations before our Lent has commenced, but the Easter mail leaves on March 7th. . . . The object of my letter is to wish you all Easter joys and blessings. You will have kept with our dearest Lord in His sorrows,—may He make you feel the joys of His Resurrection, a foretaste of that resurrection which is yet to come. Does it not seem too good to have a blessed eternity,—everlasting joys, in

store for us? And does it not make us desire these joys, not only for oneself, but for all mankind? The other alternative is so terrible,—that the Precious Blood should have been shed in vain, that God's creatures should be His enemies for all eternity! If one had but the spirit of prayer! Do pray that we may use the time and opportunities one has. I think when one comes in contact with individuals, one prays more for individual cases; and when one sees less of individuals one prays more *widely*. I like that suggestion of Father Faber's, to pray 'for love to seek God's glory, and light to find it all day long.'

"Sister Z. is better: not quite well. She likes Australia, and is thankful to be here. She said to me last evening, 'I do not think that by coming to Australia we have gone further from our Lord.' She has great hopes for our future here. I think all are feeling more settled now. We certainly lead a very quiet life. Plenty of time for prayer, which is appreciated. Pray for us, that we may all make good use of the opportunities we have of sanctifying our own souls, and of the time we have to pray for others. You will be glad to hear of a joy,—a letter from the General! I will enclose a copy."

It would be quite a mistake to suppose that there was anything like a discontented or melancholy spirit in the Community. The following extract from a letter from one of the Sisters who was Irish will give some insight into their daily life. They had just heard of the Beatification of the English Martyrs of the sixteenth century.

"*March 4, 1887.*—The English of this Community are all quite excited about these Martyrs. I hope it is all true devotion! They are going to pray to them for two English postulants, but seem rather in difficulties as to what their

names are to be, when their prayers are answered. 'Sister Fisher' will sound rather strange, and 'Sister John Thomas' is not much better. However, I dare say they will have time to make up their minds. I don't see why I should not pray to Archbishop Plunket for an Irish postulant.

"We had quite a pleasant recreation last night in Mother's room, which is very small, but has to serve as Community-Room at recreation time. We sat on cabin-boxes and ship-chairs round a very Colonial stool, on which was a still more Colonial lamp, looking over the 'Months,' &c., which came by the mail that afternoon. And we wished we could each have a holiday, and sit in arm-chairs (of which there is but one, and that is in the guest-room), reading them. We are very happy altogether, that is among ourselves; except, I must acknowledge, when dear Mother is ill, or something very dreadful happens, and then my heart at least goes down very low.

"We have a great deal to be thankful for, and often say, 'How good our Lord is!' It is wonderful what He does for us, sending us help from those from whom we least expect it, and just when every hope seems gone. I can't help thinking lately that the first verse of the Psalm, '*Qui habitat*,' applies especially to us. We *do* abide under the protection of the God of heaven, and no one else. We have the very sweetest little Chapel; and it is never very long without some one being in it; and when there is a little spare time, almost the whole Community seem to go there naturally, especially on Adoration days, when it is nearly full all day long. We have had a great deal to thank our Lord for this year."

The next is from Mother Rose Columba herself.

"*March 13, 1877.*—In one sense I am very thankful to be here. The less there is of external distraction, the nearer seems the Divine Presence. I think all like the quiet life

we are leading ; yet there are times when one is inclined to ask, 'Are we in the right place?'

"*March 25, 1887.*—As soon as I opened your letter this morning, I saw dear Mrs. Hope's name, and knew that our dearest Lord had called her to Himself. The 'glad to-morrow' had dawned for her. What a calm beautiful end ! Having her consciousness to the last, going with ready mind and well-trimmed lamp to meet the Bridegroom, for whom she had been so long watching. I can quite imagine her calmness and presence of mind, which 'Who will answer?' showed."

Mrs. Hope said this when it was proposed to administer Extreme Unction. She died on February 12th, and was buried in Highgate Cemetery.

"I am so glad you were able to be with her to the last. She was no common mind, and those who knew her well appreciated her talents and her virtues. You will miss her very much, for she was one with whom you could exchange thoughts. . . . Yet I am sure you would not wish her back, though her death has made a gap which probably will never be refilled. I know how she loved the Oratorian Fathers and the Oratory. I will not say anything of her love for Dr. Hope, which, I think, she once told me had been little short of worship. I can understand how two such clever persons would become all in all to each other ; for I think she was very lovable. Her son will feel her death very much, though I do not think it will surprise him. She loved him very much. . . . I think of her, as I last saw her, lying on her sofa near the window, with her table, and the knitting in the basket. May she now enjoy the reward of all her good works ! We have prayed, and will continue to pray for her. Were I at St. Mary Church I should miss her very much. *R.I.P.* I cannot be sorry when good people die. They have put off the mortal, as

St. Paul says, for immortality ; and what a blessed change for them, however much their friends may lament their loss !

"I feel very strongly that our work here is prayer, and reparation. If we do not pray, then I do not see of what use we are here. I do not consider our position *hopeless*, because God can do whatever He wills ; but I have often to pray not to lose confidence in Him, for, humanly speaking, there is little to encourage. The Dean says we are doing much for the Glory of God, and exhorts us to have 'great courage.' I have no wish to leave Australia. . . . Time alone will tell. The Colony is in a ruinous condition—failures, failures, failures."

"May 6, 1887.—What we really want is an addition to our numbers, and means—a little more certain than the School. Perhaps our Lord likes us to trust to Him alone. He has never let us want ; and the obligation to be careful cultivates the spirit of poverty, and entire dependence on God. The observance of Poverty has been carried rather to an excess—a good excess, and I had to speak at Chapter. We do without things which we had in England, and we *do* things also that we had not to do there. What is the result ? A general spirit of self-sacrifice, and so much content, that Sister M., speaking of some ups and downs, said, 'We should be too happy, if it were not for these things.' It is no small comfort to see all trying to love God, and to make Him some reparation."

A certain depression cannot fail to be noticed in the letters just quoted, and as long as uncertainty prevailed as to their real work in Australia it could not be otherwise. As she says, "The times are not cheering," but she adds, "God can help us when He wills." On April 29th Bishop Reynolds received the telegram which announced his nomination as Archbishop. He

said his first Mass after this news in their Chapel on the following day, the Feast of St. Catherine.

About this time a rather wholesome distraction came to them, which showed that at any rate their skill in illuminating and their artistic taste were properly appreciated in Australia, even beyond the city of Adelaide. It was the year of the Queen's Jubilee, and one of the Sisters writes:—

“*May 17, 1887.*—A deputation arrived with an Address from all the women of South Australia, urging dear Mother to undertake it, and at last she was obliged to yield. She is designing it herself, and Sister F. P. is illuminating it under her directions. The room is full of Coats of Arms, and views of Balmoral, Windsor, &c. Balmoral is already painted in the T of the title-page. It will be very beautiful when finished: but it is a great labour under the present circumstances. Dear Mother has to go to the school every morning at 11 o'clock to free Sister F. P., and on Mondays and Thursdays from 2 till 4 in the afternoon. On other days some one else has to take her place . . . Dear Mother is pretty well for her, except that her feet and ankles are terribly swollen, and she has a cold; but as long as she is well, we manage to pull on somehow. . . . There is also another Address, which was promised before this, from the Catholic Young Men's Society to the Archbishop. We shall be so glad when they are all done.”

The same letter mentions a singular natural phenomenon:—

“Sister M. R. was following Sister F. P. to the School, where they sleep, a few nights ago. It was dark, and the ground wet. She saw with astonishment that at every footstep Sister F. left a large and very brilliant spot of

light where her feet had been. She said to herself, What can it be? Is Sister F. working miracles? When they arrived at the School, they examined their shoes, and found that the soles were shining brilliantly like the spots on the ground. They could not make it out; but after a day or two found the light was caused by a long thin worm, which comes out in the damp, and when crushed emits a dazzling light. The uncle of one of our children who left school a year ago, sent dear Mother, a few days ago, the tail of a kangaroo. We made it into soup, and now we can say we have tasted kangaroo. It was not particularly nice. Sister M. R. has dried the skin to send to England."

The possibility of having to abandon Australia still at times forced itself upon them, as the following letters of Mother Rose Columba show:—

"*July 2, 1887.*—If we are obliged to leave Adelaide, I do not think we shall try another colony. We were told, from Ireland, of a Dominican Prioress who after twenty years' residence in New Zealand had failed to form a Community, and was now trying to establish a house in Dublin, hoping from thence to feed her New Zealand foundation! . . . At the end of the three years, we all thought there would be a solemn transfer of the Adelaide Community from the Obedience of the English Superiors to the Bishop of Adelaide. Mother Provincial thought so too, judging by her letters. But the Bishop of Birmingham said it was not necessary, as all Tertiaries, *ipso facto*, come under the jurisdiction of the Bishop, unless exempt. When we ceased to belong to the English Congregation, we ceased to be exempt, and consequently fell under the jurisdiction of the Bishop of Adelaide; he (the Bishop of Adelaide) being bound to govern us according to our Constitutions. Our novices must therefore make the vow of obedience to him. . . We might go to fifty

places, and not be as well off spiritually as we are here. I hear the Archbishop always speaks highly of us ; he is certainly very kind to us. The priests of North Adelaide serve our Chapel gratuitously, and so willingly ; and three or four other priests are most friendly. The Dean said a few weeks ago, 'You have more friends amongst the clergy than you know.' . . . One said to me, 'Take care of your Chapel, and say your Office, and you will be doing a great work for God.' We rarely see any of them—perhaps three or four times a year. . . . I am sure it is not by running about the streets that we can best serve God here. This is not only what we feel, but so evidently what the priests, notably the Dean, and Fathers X., Y., and Z. desire. There is not one of us who would like to go back to the more active life we lead in England ; but if we returned to England, perhaps we should have to do it for our support. If our present Schools keep up, we shall not want a living. Our settled income is one-third of our settled expenditure, and yet we are not in debt, except for the house. . . . If we mixed more with the people, we should certainly have a wider circle of acquaintances, but would God be better served? The priests here must know what is most *wanted*. God had His own designs in bringing us here, and we trust, in His own good time, He will let us expand."

The rumour mentioned above that "Cardinal Moran was coming out, with full powers, to be Pope in Australia," was not quite verified, but the creation of an Australian Cardinal was a new departure, and caused considerable excitement ; and when it was announced that his Eminence was about to pay a visit to Adelaide, in order to install the newly promoted Archbishop, even the quiet little Community participated in the

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general flutter of excitement. One of the Sisters writes:—

"*September 12, 1887.*—The Archbishop was installed in the Cathedral yesterday, and received the Pallium from the Cardinal. We were told it was a gorgeous and magnificent ceremony. There were eight Bishops present, and numbers of Priests. . . . Sister M. R. interrupted my letter by saying that the Cardinal, our Archbishop, and the Bishop of Hobart Town had arrived, and we were all to go to see them. The Archbishop looks ill, and the Cardinal is only just recovering from congestion of the lungs, but he seems well, and was very amiable, and not at all stiff. Dear Mother said to him that she had been told that we had offered ourselves to his diocese. He looked rather shy about it, and tried to get out of it; and when taking leave, said, 'Perhaps you will come some day, and work in Sydney.' 'Oh, but your Eminence,' said our Mother, to Sister M. R.'s horror, 'we also heard that you refused to have us.' He did not know how to get out of this, and said it was not exactly that. I thought our Archbishop, who was very near me, seemed rather on thorns; and Sister M. R. told us afterwards that, though she was admiring dear Mother's courage, she did not know how to look. He is coming to say Mass in our Chapel on Saturday, and Sister M. R. is going to have the pleasure of putting out your breakfast set."

The present writer must plead guilty to having been the unintentional cause of much annoyance to the Sisters. When he heard that Dr. Moran was appointed Archbishop of Sydney, he wrote to Dr. Ullathorne to ask him whether he thought there might not be a better opening for the Community at Sydney, and whether he would speak to Dr. Moran on the

subject. Dr. Ullathorne replied by saying that it would not be right to interfere. He probably thought that the idea had emanated from the Sisters, and thus Dr. Moran became persuaded that "the Sisters had authorised a priest to ask him to receive the Community into his diocese." This was the form in which the incident was reported to the Sisters. It gave them much pain, because, after the great kindness which they had received from Archbishop Reynolds, they could not bear that he should think them capable of taking so serious a step without first consulting him, and obtaining his sanction. Mother Rose Columba was, therefore, anxious to repudiate the supposition in the presence of both Archbishop and Cardinal.

This was not the only attempt that I had made to procure for them what seemed to me a more promising sphere of work. Their prospects seemed to me so uncertain, that I could not refrain from trying to interest in their favour those who had influence in other Colonies. In 1886 Dr. Grimes, S.M., formerly Rector of the Marist College at Paignton, was appointed Bishop of Christchurch, New Zealand. He had been extra-ordinary Confessor to the nuns at St. Mary Church, and took a great interest in the Adelaide Foundation. I spoke about them to him, and asked him to go and see them on his way to his diocese. It seemed to me that the climate of New Zealand would agree so much better with them than that of Adelaide. I set all this before Mother Rose Columba, but the following letter will

show that the attractiveness of New Zealand was no attraction to her:—

“*September 19, 1887.*—Yet another Bishop, his lordship of Dunedin, the next diocese to Christchurch, paid us a visit this morning. He is so like Dr. Ullathorne that I was quite startled. He gives glowing descriptions of the beauty and the excellence of the climate of New Zealand, and of the way in which religion flourishes. They seem to have plenty of Religious; and when they want more they get them ‘ready made’ from Ireland. I spoke of the Prioress who had been twenty years without a postulant. She is of his diocese; had been out only fifteen years, and amongst all his nuns, they seem to have *five* New Zealand postulants. But he said, ‘When we want nuns, we get them from home.’ Christchurch, he said, was well off for Churches, and it has five Communities, the Sacred Heart, the Sisters of Mercy, the Good Shepherd, Sisters of St. Joseph, and Mission Sisters. ‘Dr. Grimes,’ he added, ‘will fall on pleasant lines.’ He said he had been on the Mission at the Cape of Good Hope and New Zealand for thirty-two years, and that it was a very pleasant life; though there were many things which he looks back upon with pleasure now, that were anything but pleasant at the time. He is certainly one who does not make his own crosses. He had a singularly sweet smile, and is full of life and energy.

“From his description, Christchurch is far better off than Adelaide, from a religious point of view. And would *you* like us to leave this most forlorn place for the sake of what certainly would be more pleasant to nature? I am sure you would *not*. If those who sow in tears reap in joy, may we not hope some day to see the seed at least germinating? I cannot think that all these years of sorrow and suffering will end in a *blank*. I say ‘sorrow and suffering,’ not that we are unhappy, and we all feel that we have very much to

thank God for ; yet I doubt if any of us would like to go through the past again.

"Sister X. has told you of the Cardinal's visit, and his gracious offer to help us at any time. He certainly was most kind, and spoke of his great hopes to see us well established in Adelaide. She will also have told you of the Bishop of Perth. His offer of a Mission among the blacks was really a tempting invitation. I liked the Bishop very much. He reminded me of *our* Bishop (Plymouth), not that he is like him except in height, but there was something so engaging in his manner, and I know he is much beloved by the people of Western Australia. *There* is plenty of space for Religious. What is really wanted are Sisters who will go in twos and threes, and have few religious obligations. A Bishop here cannot afford to keep a Community. In the "two and three" system, the priests pay for the teaching of the children, and the small alms in kind help. The Bishop of Dunedin told me that the Irish Dominicans do all his active work ; I think they are called Second Order. They do not go out, except to their own Convents, but externs seem to have pretty free access, and all are engaged in teaching.

"Strange to say, the few who have been attracted to us have chosen us for the *retired* life we lead. I think it may be that life here is such a whirl—money, and pleasure—that those who wish to leave the outer world, wish to leave it altogether. The other Communities, on account of their numerous works, are a good deal in communication with this same outer world. My fear is, that we may not always be allowed the quiet life we now lead. — Then give me Blacks ! Blacks or Whites, — I do not think his Grace means us to leave Adelaide. A few weeks since, one of the leading Catholic mothers, who did not like us when first we came, said to me that our School was such an advantage to Adelaide ; the improvement in the children was marked, &c. I replied, it was well we had done some-

thing, for I often wondered whether we were doing any good. 'Do not say that,' she answered; 'his Grace has the highest opinion of this Community,' &c., &c. I believe his Grace does speak highly of us, and that he would be deeply grieved if we did leave.

"I think there is little doubt that, had we space and means, we should be able to give our Lord many brides, though in a humble class of life—not yet, but in time—and it would be very much to shelter girls from this wicked city. But where to get the means? Also, I am sure that a nicely kept Chapel, where people could come and pray when they liked, would do a work. Why is our room-chapel thought so much of? Because it is pretty, and well cared for. Even to keep up the present Community, we have to teach a Higher School; that is mostly our support. To teach there must be *teachers*, and these children must be taught by those whom they look upon as rather better than themselves. They will take anything from us; but they would not submit to those whom they considered 'no better than themselves.' What we really want is a few English young ladies with means. If you could help us in this way by direction, and, above all, by prayers, you will be doing much for us. Whoever comes, must make up their mind for sacrifice. . . . Our Lord takes care of us, and we have opportunities of keeping the vow of Poverty. If we could have gone out in 'twos and threes,' we might be in four places now. But what about religious life and the Divine Office?"

I am afraid my reply to this was rather discouraging, for I pointed out that English girls generally preferred Convents in England, and that those who had a religious vocation had usually a great distaste for teaching young ladies, especially when those young ladies were mostly Protestants. Teaching a Young Ladies' School is re-

garded by most nuns with an aversion similar to that which priests have for a private chaplaincy. This will explain the following letter :—

“September 30, 1887.—Our work? Not quite ‘only teaching Protestant young ladies.’ It is quite true we began with only non-Catholics. We must have a School to help us to pay rent, and exist. If our Lord in His mercy had not sent us these children, where should we have been? In prison? We did not receive any money until we had been here six months. . . . On what were we to support ourselves? On what we earned by teaching. It was a wonder they came. . . . Now we have eighteen Catholics, and four more Catholics come for music-lessons; and our one Protestant boarder wishes to be received into the Church. Yesterday, a Protestant lady came to place her child with us; she was so pleased with the way her nieces are being educated at our School that, despite the Anglican Bishop, she chooses to send her child here.”

The following letter requires a little explanation. Her correspondent had been making a Retreat, and in the course of the Retreat his Confessor told him that it was most likely that God would call him one day to undertake the episcopal Office. He was naturally somewhat disturbed by an intimation coming in such a manner. It was not a matter he could speak about to many people, but he did confide it to Mother Rose Columba, and this was her reply :—

“October 26, 1887.—Your letter has just arrived. I obeyed orders; and as soon as I read it, I put it in the kitchen fire. Can I keep a secret? I think so: or in my time I might have done much mischief! Do you know? the contents did

come and go ; and though one may hope that more use is made of the good, and perhaps less of the bad, yet how much there is still to regret ! How many opportunities pass *unused*. Looking back on the past year, there is much reason to say '*Deo Gratias*' for ; and perhaps less than usual to regret—most likely, because there have been fewer occasions. As one's outward occasions diminish, so one get's nearer to our Lord ; and the nearer one tries to live with Him, to follow Him, the more one sees there is to mend.

"There is a very earnest desire just now—I may say, has been for some time, but especially since our general Retreat in June, to lead a life of closer union with Him ; which, of course, means a life of mortification and prayer in the spirit of Reparation—this only to a small extent—but it is a beginning. I find, since our Sundays of Reparation began, there is more exactitude about the monthly Retreat. We have a conference every month, when each one says what she thinks will be best for the general good. All like it ; as we never have any sermons or instructions, we must do what we can to help ourselves.

"The life of Clare Vaughan made a great, and a very good impression. I am so glad we shall have a copy of our own. It was the ardour of her charity, not *austerities*, that caused the bodily frame to fail—the keen spirit cutting through its sheath of flesh—she *must* immolate herself, it was a kind of necessity with her. Death was truly an entrance into life. I can quite believe she would rejoice really—I might say naturally—when she knew she would not long be detained here. It is a life that carries conviction with it, so true was the intensity of her love. I often offer her love to our dear Lord, and tell Him that I wish I had her faith and love, though I know I am not worthy of such gifts as were hers.

"I sometimes think this will be a year of expansion. There seems little ground for such a supposition at present, and I certainly do not feel equal to it. If it has to be done,

strength will be given. Expansion would mean another house. We have reduced our debt to £1500. *Deo Gratias!* The two houses cost £4560. If the Schools keep up we shall do. More scholars mean more *teachers*.

"January 13, 1888.—Did I tell you I had asked Mr. M. to be our temporal father? He said he would be very willing to help us in any way in his power. Not anything has been said about the Chapel. He asked if the next house to ours was for sale, and if I knew the price. It is for sale, but I do not know the price. . . . '*Lætentur omnes qui sperant in Te, Domine: quoniam tu benedixisti justo, scuto bonæ voluntatis tuæ coronasti eum,*' in the Matins, seemed to come very appropriately. I like to think our Lord is protecting us, and in His own good time He will send us help. Still He has His *instruments*; and when those instruments are testing a vocation, they must not throw too much cold water, lest they extinguish it! Timid souls require a good deal of encouragement, and sometimes it is necessary for others to do the courage.

"I can readily believe priests will send girls who are worth having to Convents in England. It is only natural. I want you to do the supernatural, and try and inspire some with the desire of sacrifice. Look at Clare Vaughan. Few like her. It is quite true, God alone must suffice. The hope to do, or *be*, something for His honour—there is literally no other attraction. Perhaps you will say that they can *be* that in England. Yes; but here there is a complete sacrifice of everything. I have felt very much inclined to say, 'Don't be discouraged.' It is you rather who ought to say that to me. That I am not discouraged I attribute to Sister X.'s prayers. The others sometimes say, 'How can you go on? I should have given up long ago.' It is only by looking *up*, and trusting blindly in the Omnipotence and boundless love of God for His poor creatures. Humanly speaking, there is little hope.

"January 26, 1888.—The date brings back many thoughts

of that sad time (Mr. Chatto died January 26, 1882). How is it with those who cared for the Daison and its inhabitants? Truly God's ways are not as our ways; for it would have seemed best for religion to have left him for some years longer. May he be now receiving his reward for having built that lovely Church! How his accidental glory may go on increasing! But it is safer to say, *Requiescat in pace*. For who knows how long he may be detained before he enjoys the full reward. Poor Mrs. Chatto! She, too, most willingly joined in all he gave. There was so much that was engaging about her. *R.I.P.*

"Speaking about ourselves and our prospects, the Dean said, 'If it (the Convent) is *established* in thirty years, it is as much as can be expected.' So you see how entirely we depend on the help Almighty God sends us. . . . I have not given up hope yet:—I do not mean from the English Congregation, but from Almighty God. He will send us help, if He intends us to remain here. I rather shocked the Dean by using 'if.'

"I shall not send my letter for some days, but as the holidays are ending, I was making a distant preparation. Distant preparation reminds me that Lent is very near—two weeks to prepare for it. I like Lent, both for itself and as a preparation for Easter. All through Lent one is constantly, as it were, with our Lord and His sorrows; one feels more what He must have suffered for us, and how He desires the salvation of souls. I was able to fast and abstain the whole of Advent; and I shall try Lent, but I am not certain if I shall succeed. Here one feels doubly bound to do as much as one can, to make reparation not only for one's own sins, but for those who seem to forget all about the laws of the Church. The rules for fasting are different here. I know there are only Fridays and Ember days in Advent, and meat is allowed on Maundy Thursday. A small quantity of butter is allowed at the morning collation. Of course we do not use any of these dispensa-

tions—I mean, those who can fast do as they do in England.

“*January 31.*—Many thanks for your letter of December 22, your Ordination day. I am so glad you are going to Rome—I should say have been, for by this time I hope you are safe at home. It will be a great pleasure to yourself. *Our* diocese will be represented; and if you see the Master General, I am sure you will speak good things for us. I shall look out for a letter in a few weeks, telling all about your visit to Rome. You told me about the Bell. You were fortunate to secure it. . . . The Elevation at the Midnight Mass was a most solemn time for its first sounding in its new home.

“*February 2.*—I saw, in this mail’s *Tablet*, that you, *i.e.*, Bishops, Clergy, and Laity of England, were to be presented to His Holiness on January 10. How I congratulate you! It will be a never-to-be-forgotten day. What a grand thing it is to be a member of the One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church! How much you will have to tell when you return! I hope a long letter will find its way here some day.

“You ask, Why do we drop C. in J. M. D.? Because we have not any right to it, as we do not belong to the Congregation of St. Catherine. But we may still consider St. Catherine as our Mother, as she is specially the Mother of the Sisters of the Third Order. If we remain here, it would not surprise me if we were to grow into the Second Order. Of course that could not be until we have more of a foundation than we have at present. We all think it may become a *necessity*, but much would have to be done and thought of before that. The present Constitutions will have to be fitted some day to our new state.”

At length the clouds of darkness and uncertainty began to clear away, and the following letter announces the unmistakable indication of God’s will as to their

work and future life in Adelaide. The work was henceforth clear and definite, although the means by which it was to be put into practical execution were still unknown.

"*March 15, 1888.*—I had to make use of Sister A. J. to thank you for your Roman letter, as I was not quite equal to a long talk. I am well again now, and I have something to tell you which will surprise you.

"Ever since we have been here, I think you know, the thought of Perpetual Adoration has been in our minds, and that sometimes the Archbishop has spoken to us about it, especially once, about three years since. I will copy his letter, and then you will see what he said. Probably Sister A. J. told you we were going to alter our Chapel. When his Grace was here for the clothing, he was speaking of the alterations, and said, 'I have something I can give you which may suit your Chapel; it is an inscription: "*Adoremus in Aeternum.*"' I may tell you here that in Father Kavanagh's sermon at the Clothing, he dwelt on the advantage of a life of prayer, and of how much more might be done by imploring grace than by activity. When I wrote to his Grace to thank him for the Inscription, I reminded him of our desire. To my astonishment, he sent his reply next morning by hand. I had first asked him to pray for the dear Bishop (of Plymouth) on his Sacerdotal Jubilee. I will copy his Grace's letter:—

"*March 9.*—I will gladly offer the Holy Sacrifice tomorrow for the venerable Bishop. Apart from other considerations, though many, the fact of his having worn his "Crown of Thorns" so long, enlists all the sympathies of my heart in his regard.

"By all means make known your intentions to establish the work of Perpetual Adoration of the Most Adorable. It will be "contradicted"; nay more, it will be a "Sign for

Contradiction." Yet fear not. God will, in His own good time, prosper it.

"I believe I mentioned to you some time ago my attempts to establish Perpetual Adoration connected with our Convents, and how all my efforts were baffled. In this I begin to see it was not *His* time, and I believe that with His Divine assistance it will be our work in the *very* near future.

"In mentioning the Inscription "*Adoremus*" I had not then the remotest thought of the work so dear to you and me. So it evidently is a happy omen. May God bless you and the "little Flock" in all your ways, and prosper every word and work for His greater glory, and the salvation of the souls whom He has redeemed with His precious Blood.'

"It is so great a grace that it seems scarcely credible. I do not feel elated. Much time must elapse, and much interior preparation. The fact of having our Lord in the midst of us has led to the desire of never leaving Him alone; and the knowledge of how He is neglected and insulted here adds to the desire."

This distinct manifestation of the determination of the Archbishop seemed to put new life into them all. As his Grace said, "It would be in God's good time;" but the permission to make it known, and to take measures for establishing the Perpetual Adoration "in the near future" made time seem short and labour light. The following letter from one of the Sisters shows the feeling of the Community. It was written about the same time as the letter just given.

"I once told you, when we first came to Australia, that I thought dear Mother would be quite happy if only we had

‘Perpetual Adoration.’ Then it seemed a vague sort of dream in the dim distance, with scarce a possibility of realisation; and now it does seem so wonderful that almost without an effort on our part this beautiful work is partly begun, and only awaits more members for its completion. We little dreamed, on leaving England, that so great a privilege was in store for us so many thousand miles away. . . . I often wish you could pay a visit to our little Chapel, especially on Friday afternoons, when we have ‘Exposition’ from three until seven. It is only a room after all, but it is so devotional.”

CHAPTER XIII

1888-1891

*ENCOURAGEMENTS—PROSPECTUS OF THEIR LIFE AND
WORK—HOPE DEFERRED—AN ARCHBISHOP'S ADVEN-
TURES IN THE BUSH—DAYS OF ADORATION—PLANS
FOR CHAPEL—THE CONTRACTOR—LAYING OF FOUN-
DATION STONE—LAST LETTERS.*

THE letter of the Archbishop gave at once a definite object towards which the Community could now direct their thoughts and aspirations. They could now think about making a permanent home for that devotion to which they wished to dedicate their lives. How their Church was to be built they knew not; but some kind responses they had had from England, when their intentions were made known, gave them the hope that further aid would come in time. The smallness of the Community made it impossible to carry out the Perpetual Adoration at present, but they confidently expected that, as God had manifested to them what He would have them do in Adelaide, He would also lead to them fellow-workers who would enable them to carry His designs into effect. It has often been remarked, that works that are to last are long in being matured. The following letters will show the thoughts that were passing in the mind of the Prioress at the

time succeeding the announcement of their future work:—

“*April* 13, 1888.—Thank you so much for the long letter telling of your homeward journey. How pleased the poor nuns at Perugia must have been to see you! Your visit was decidedly a red-letter day with them. I am sure you would feel much for their loneliness and poverty. Their cup of sorrow must be nearly full. I read most of the letter for the benefit of the Community.

“We have been very busy for the last five weeks. The expansion came sooner than I expected. The influx of boarders (we now have eleven) made it necessary that the Chapel should be enlarged. This could only be done by throwing in another room; then everything had to be procured for the boarders, and they had to be fitted in. This entailed many moves; and the result is, that another house became a necessity. Times are improving, and prices rising; but we had agreed to take a similar house to this for £900 less than we gave for this, and the mortgage at 5 instead of $6\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. We were on the very verge of losing it; and had we not concluded the purchase now, might have paid dearly for the delay. Of course, it is an additional burthen in many ways; but if we have boarders, we must have room. What is still more difficult to get than room, is help. The School is a heavy weight; at the same time it is our only means of support. I say *only*, because the small help of the few dowries we have does not half pay our way. ‘Make the sign of the Cross, and go on,’ was our Mother’s advice to herself, and we must follow it. God has hitherto taken care of us, and I am sure He will not fail us now. May His blessed Will be done, and all will be right.

“To-day a Mission is to be commenced by the Redemptorist Fathers. Father Vaughan was expected. If all is right, his Grace is sure to bring them up here. Possibly I

may not write for some time. I have to go an hour a day more to the School, and to help more in the Noviciate.

"June 6, 1888.—The Archbishop wrote a very kind letter for Corpus Christi, but he did not make any allusion to the Perpetual Adoration. Perhaps he thinks it best to let it rest for a while. It cannot be commenced—even the *day* Adoration, until we have at least three more for the Choir.

"*Feast of the Sacred Heart.*—May the love of that Divine Heart overflow into all our hearts! We have the Exposition on Sunday, as on school-days so few could be in the Chapel. Yesterday came the enclosed letter from the General, and one from his Secretary. It is much to have permission to write to him. . . . The allusion to our being placed under him was not an answer to anything we had said. Perhaps he remembered the Bishop's request when first we came. I wrote to his Grace this morning about the Rosary Confraternity.

"June 11.—I must not forget to congratulate you on the most satisfactory state of your Schools, the Report, and the Grant. You are right. To be devoted entirely to teaching requires an education, and a Rule adapted for the purpose, otherwise the teaching becomes a strain. A few months ago a person called here inquiring for a situation as Governess. She had been a Sister of Mercy—not in this Colony—for some years, and had been strained with school-work. She told me she had asked for a little rest, but had not got it. The Schools *must* be kept up. She had been Music-Sister, and had had, I think she said, seventy pupils. I asked how she managed about her prayers. She shrugged her shoulders, and said, '*The lessons had to be given,*' so I expect the head had to be strained. I thought what school-work may come to when there is a great demand on the time of the Sisters, and what Religious may come to, when Schools become absorbing."

"June 15.—The Archbishop is going to erect the Confraternity of the Rosary in the Cathedral, as soon as he gets

power from the General. May our Lady of the Rosary help the archdiocese of Adelaide ! Life here is very different in many respects to life in England ; but if one can do more for the glory of God, that is sufficient attraction. I do not think God will leave us to ourselves, though things do look, shall I say, risky ? We certainly have *only* the good Providence of God to *depend* on. If He sends pupils, and some one to teach them, all in the temporal way will be right. I know the Dean is satisfied with the spiritual state of the Community, from something he said to me. Of course, I know we are not all perfect, and that there are ups and downs ; but I think I may truly say, there is a growing spirit of prayer and mortification ; and that is something to be thankful for. We begin our Retreat on the 20th or 21st, as soon as School is over. All go in together, except Mother Sub-Prioress, who is now making hers, and the lay Sisters. If you think of it, always pray for us between the 10th of June and the 1st of July. It is the only time when we can make our Retreat. Pray that I may never lose confidence in God. You do not know all that has to be borne. I have sometimes to think of our Lord in His bitter Agony. *He* did know all. Yes ! I know all is weighed and measured by the Sacred Heart, and that grace is given as needed. Pray that I may not waste so much grace. How much there will be to regret, when regret is useless, for time that has passed ; yet one hopes to include all in one last fervent act of loving Contrition.

“ I must tell you that the Archbishop spoke of the Perpetual Adoration, and is desirous that some little sketch of what we desire should be sent out. His Grace, I think, wants it to begin in October, but things are vague at present. The Fathers, S. J., called one day. They were very friendly ; one especially warmly approved of the Perpetual Adoration, saying it was greatly needed here, and that if we did not get postulants and boarders it would not be his fault. Another gave us some hopes of boarders. Two more

boarders would cover the expenses of the new house, which we are going to call St. Mary's of the Rosary.

"This same house is a necessity, if we hope to increase. At the same time, until we do increase, it adds not a little to our anxieties. I try not to be anxious, as it does not make things better, and then the loving and powerful Heart of our Lord *can* help us. That is our trust.

"I do not think that I have told you that the Archbishop has commissioned us to ask powers from the General for him to erect the Confraternity of the Rosary at the Cathedral. The Rosary is already said there every day.

"We were so sorry to hear of the death of good Canon Woollett. Though one cannot regret it for himself, yet the dear Bishop will feel his loss. *R.I.P.*

"At the time of the Mission in North Adelaide, I asked the Dean if there was anything that we could do. He replied, 'Pray. Talking is nothing, and preaching is good, but prayer is the great thing. The work is done by the Spirit of the Almighty moving amongst the people.'"

The death of Canon Woollett, who had been for so many years Vicar-General to the Bishop of Plymouth, led to my being appointed to that office, the immediate consequence of which was that I had to leave St. Mary Church, and take up my abode at Plymouth. Mother Rose Columba took a lively interest in all that concerned the diocese of Plymouth, and especially when anything happened that affected me or St. Mary Church. On hearing of the change, she wrote as follows:—

"*July 8, 1888.*—Yesterday afternoon I received your letter of June 6. What shall I say? I am not surprised, but I am very sorry; sorry for St. Mary Church, and still more sorry for you, for there will not be much in a Vicar-

General's life according to your taste. Such an uprooting, and such a complete change! Your own thought will be for the Bishop, and how you can help him, and above that the manifestation of the Will of God. . . . You must think of and for others, and how often will you be inclined, tempted to wish yourself back in your quiet little room at St. Mary Church. . . . Of course, I shall pray for you very much. I offered Holy Communion for you this morning. God will give you all the help you need to carry your Cross, for Cross I feel it will be in many ways. . . . The Dean said last evening, 'Let us thank God that he has not got the Mitre.' The Mitre at home does not mean all that it does here,—and the Pallium still more. The Dean said, 'Our Archbishop is one in ten hundred thousand. Any other man would have died of a broken heart long ago, if he had had to go through half of what he has had ever since his Consecration.'

"We have now decided to give up the Middle School. I took a good part of the teaching, hoping help was coming; but it could not go on indefinitely in that way, and Sister Y.'s whole time is wanted in the Upper School, which is now increased. I am sorry, but it cannot be helped. Pray that God may bless our work. Then all will be well."

The next letters will show how precarious was the state of health, not only of the Prioress, but of another member of the Community, who had while at St. Mary Church a very severe attack of laryngitis, which nearly cost her her life. She had a similar attack in Adelaide:—

"*August 2, 1888.*—Sister A. J. has told you the little there is to tell about ourselves. It is not very cheery just now, but if God is pleased, that is all one wants. Since the four hours' Exposition began, the Cross has not been

wanting. How many Acts of Confidence I make with my *will* I cannot say. One of the Jesuit Fathers said, when speaking of our position here, 'You must be very anxious. All very well to try, but you *must* be anxious.' I thought this rather encouraging, coming from a holy Jesuit. . . . Sister Z. not quite so well, ditto Sister Y., and Mother S. has retired, so you will see in what difficulties we are. Hope is a grand virtue.

"*September 12, 1888.*—It is time to begin my letter to you. We (that means Mother Sub-Prioress and myself) paid a visit to the Sisters of Mercy, at the Archbishop's desire. We were most warmly welcomed, and they showed us everything they thought would interest us, and pressed us to make the visit as long as possible. Their Chapel, lately built, is larger than ours, and kept in beautiful order.

"On our return, I found a lady nurse waiting. She is not a Catholic, but likes coming here. I thought it a good opportunity to ask about 'hard arteries,' without saying why I made the inquiry.¹ 'That is serious,' she said; 'the walls of the arteries should be elastic. When they are "hard" the blood cannot flow freely through them, and congeals, implicates the heart, and may produce syncope.' She said she would look the subject up. I tell you because I think you like to hear. I *feel* much as usual, though I was told I had aged five years in the last few months!

"There is much to do. Sister F. P. is still partially laid up with her knee, although it is better. Some have colds. We all thought of St. Mary Church when Sister F. P. was ill. Dr. C. found her gasping in my arms. That was a night! It was only through a merciful interposition of Providence that she did not choke to death alone in the dark. It would be too long to tell why, but it made me determine to see to, or do, all the nursing myself, even

¹ See p. 313.

though I knew I should pay for it afterwards. It is a great blessing to be able to stand extra work and anxiety, when the time of trial comes, and when there is danger, a mistake may have fatal consequences.

"I had told Sister F. P. to write to you. We, too, thought of the chair. Some day I hope to get some sort of reclining chair; but such a thing, even the plainest, would cost £2 or £3. We must wait.

"I think I asked you once before if you thought it would be of any use for two of us to come to England? It would cost at least £200, which is money. . . . But unless there was some good prospect we could not risk it.

"*September 26.*—The children are very fond of the School. Our boarders are good children, and have improved in piety and manners. They will still improve, I hope. They are to have their annual tea-party to-day. It was pretty to see them come in with quantities of flowers; the preparation is an immense pleasure to them.

"*September 27.*—Now something about myself. I do not think Dr. Cawley is quite satisfied with me. He said something about 'disease of the arteries,' and that they were *hard*. I do not know what he apprehends, but he gave me somewhat of a scolding, adding, 'We do not want to lose you.' If I find out what disease of the arteries means I will let you know. I feel fairly well now; only people tell me I am getting thin—thin and old-looking. There is a good deal to *think* of. Still, I always add there is much, very much to be thankful for. We are all of one mind. Then the willingness of the Archbishop to let us be *quiet* in this land of 'do,' is another subject for thankfulness. Not long since, the Dean brought a priest to call who lives in the Silver Mining centres. He said that 'We could not have any idea of the need of Prayer in Australia, prayer always going up.' How delightful it would be to go through the world, and provide every neglected Altar with what was needful. We have done a little,—a little drop in the

ocean, and hope, as time goes on, to do more,—but it is very little.

“October 5, 1888.—Had I been given to tears, I should have sat down this week and cried my heart out. Then I thought I would write to you, and tell you some of my troubles. Lastly came, ‘What use would that be? It would not mend matters.’ So I am not going to entertain you with miseries. I know you pray for us, and our only hope is in prayer. Some day we hope things will be brighter: they might be much worse.

“The Archbishop was here for the clothing of two lay Sisters on October 2. He spoke much of the Perpetual Adoration, and is desirous of getting up an Association, something like the Guard of the Sacred Heart. He is also encouraging ‘Hours of Adoration’ in the Churches in the city.

October 31, 1888.—Father Vaughan came on Monday. After his breakfast, we five went to the guest-room to see him. He is like the dear Bishop to a certain extent, but unlike him too. Of course, we talked of him. I showed him the photograph you sent, and even offered it to him, but he said he would not take it from us. He had come to meet some Fathers from England on Wednesday or Thursday, and perhaps he will call again.

“November 4.—The Archbishop and Father Vaughan were here on Friday. . . . It is so seldom that we see an English priest,—besides the pleasure of his being our own Bishop’s brother. He asked if we all had come from St. Mary Church.

“November 11, 1888.—F. Vaughan called again with F. Plunkett. He was in excellent spirits, and looked and talked like the old Bishop. . . . The Archbishop told us that altogether 270 priests and nuns have come out to Australia this year. Where there are the means, there is a way. The other dioceses are rich: Adelaide is poor. The King of kings is the richest of all: and in Him we must trust.”

Father Vaughan's visit was evidently a great pleasure to her. One of the Sisters writes :—

"Father Edmund Vaughan said Mass here about a fortnight ago. As he came into the Chapel I could not help looking up at dear Mother: she was smiling all over. He looked so like our dear old Bishop, only he is not nearly so tall or fine-looking. He came up here twice afterwards. . . . L. would think dear Mother very thin. I never saw her look so wasted. When I see her kneeling at the rail, after every one else has gone to bed, with her head buried in her hands, I think she must be praying for this Foundation, and I wonder how she has courage to go on; no postulants, and no chance of any. How the School goes on with so few to teach is a marvel; and yet the parents are quite satisfied, and the children are sorry when the holidays come."

Mother Rose Columba wrote a short account of what they proposed to do, and sent it to the Irish *Messenger of the Sacred Heart*, and a similar one which she asked me to obtain the insertion of in the *Tablet*. In consequence, I received several letters from young people wishing to join them, but none of them had sufficient educational powers to be of much help to them in teaching. Solomon says, "Hope that is deferred afflicteth the soul," and the hopes that had risen so high in the spring, began again to flag, as the year drew to its close without any apparent sign of their expectation being realised :—

"December 1, 1888.—Very many thanks for your letter, and especially the one to the *Tablet*, which I hope has been inserted, as it would give weight to the notice. I

cannot say that I expect much from the said notice, though God can make use of what means He pleases. I did not object to your saying that we belonged to Mother Margaret, though I told you why we did not.

"As I am on the subject of ourselves—do you think the Bishop would ask his brother, Father Edmund, to befriend us? If such an one took us up he might help us, and perhaps he would if the Bishop asked him. . . . We have had quite unexpectedly another most kind letter from the Master-General. He evidently takes quite an interest in us. He exhorts us to patience and confidence; and to be very careful whom we receive, remarking that quality is to be preferred to quantity.

"*December 22, 1888.*—Your ordination day; and, I may say, my first acquaintance with you, though you were in Rome and I in England. Miss Randolph called and begged prayers for you. I little thought then we should know so much of each other. Twenty-two years a priest! How much to be thankful for! how many graces received! and how many opportunities of benefiting others! and you will add, How much to be responsible for! how much to regret! I hope to offer Holy Communion for you, and I will remind others to do the same.

"After I had sent my last, I was wondering whether I had done well to send it. Sister X. came in and said much the same as I had written to you. A day or two after Sister Z. spoke much in the same way, saying, unless circumstances improved much before the end of 1889, our position might be considered hopeless. I do not like to set times for Almighty God. He will do what is *best* for us in His own good time. If it became evident that we cannot stay here, then we must look elsewhere—not in the Colonies.

"A Melbourne priest called. He said, when we spoke of postulants, 'Get help from your Mother House.' 'Not help you! Impossible! Your coming out here, then, was a mistake under those conditions.' I said we might have

returned. 'No Community ought to be expected to support itself under twenty years.' The Sisters of Mercy, he seemed to think, were the only exception. I do not think the Sisters of Mercy here consider themselves an exception. He spoke much of the progress of religion—or rather its 'good standing' in Melbourne. As he talked of the Religious, it was how they stood with outsiders, their progress, their business-like habits, laying themselves out for success. All this was very simply said; but when he invited us to Melbourne, I thought *I had rather not—do, do, do.*

"December 29.—I hope you do not dislike pencil as much as I do, but I collapsed last night, and am now stretched on a ship-chair and a cabin-box, feeling not unlike we did on the *Orient* in stormy weather. The letters must go to-morrow, and I do not wish the mail to go without a letter of thanks to you; thanks for both of yours, and for sending the St. Mary Church parcel. I am so grieved to hear of dear Mother Prioress' illness.

"I will tell you what my trouble was. . . . You will see how very inconvenient these wants are, and how they press more heavily sometimes than others. Add, the uncertainty of the present and the hopelessness (humanly speaking) of the future. The Advent Office was so comforting—'*dicite : Pusillanimes confortamini,*'—(Hebdom. ii., Feria vi. *Ant. ad Benedictus*), came very home one night at Lauds. So it is only to go on *hoping*. Yesterday Sister Z. said, 'We have only you to look to to do anything; and see what your health is.' As I habitually keep Choir and Refectory, do all the fasting and abstinence, teach daily in the School, and am pretty well at the beck and call of everybody, I said, 'What can I do?' 'Go to Europe and get postulants.' Not my health, but the cost of the journey and its probable results are greater obstacles than my health. A Benedictine nun has gone alone to England to try to get postulants. They have been out forty years or more in Sydney. She had leave from Rome to go in secular dress.

This will show how little prospect there is of postulants here. Do not think I am depressed. I have very much to be thankful for in the Community. There is a good will and a generous spirit, and much unity and charity. We have to live very '*near*,' but there is never a word of complaint, and all cheerfully agree to whatever may be proposed, either to add to prayers, or to go without whatever might be considered a necessity. So you see if I could sit down and cry sometimes it is only weakness."

Thus the year 1888 came to an end, and 1889 did not open very cheerfully for them. It seems strange to hear of excessive heat at Christmas time, and one forgets that it is midsummer at the antipodes. Some of the minor inconveniences of the heat are amusingly described by the Sister who looked after the chapel:—

"*January 6, 1889.*— . . . We have had a hotter Christmas this year than has been known in Adelaide since the Observatory was erected in 1856. The Archbishop told us that on Christmas morning, in the Cathedral, the six large candles were kept in a cool place until about a quarter of an hour before Mass, when they were put on the Altar. But, in spite of these precautions, they soon fell back against the curtains; and he thought that, if it had not been for a man who jumped over the rails and got them down, they would have had a second edition of Santiago. Our candles decorated the larder or cellar for the greater part of the day, and Sister M. R. suggested that we ought to have Benediction down there! . . . At Sydney the Cardinal was celebrating Mass in the Cathedral, on Christmas morning, under a temporary roof, when suddenly the rain poured in, in floods, about two feet from where he stood. There was only one shoot, and that was stopped up, so that there were soon six inches of water on

the ground. The congregation were up to their ankles, and all in a muddle of broken Minton tiles, mud, sand, and water. They were obliged to lay down benches for the Cardinal and his priests to get back to the sacristy. In Maitland, where the summer is as hot as it is here, there was a sudden storm of snow, which smothered and killed 6000 sheep. The Archbishop says there is a great disturbance in the elements; and he expects we shall have floods here also, unless at some other place a little further on.

“He told us that he was once travelling with Dean Nevin, when they came to a valley, in which there was a creek quite dried up. They left their buggy and baggage, and sat down in the creek. He was looking at the rocks and enjoying the scenery, when, looking up suddenly, he saw an immense body of water, about thirty feet high, coming straight down towards the place where they sat. He jumped up, calling out to Dean Nevin to run for his life. The Dean thought he had lost his senses, but fortunately did as he was told, and they just escaped being swept away. I think it was the same day that their horse died in the buggy, and they were obliged to walk thirty miles, carrying all their baggage. They did not reach the creek, on the opposite side of which was the station to which they were going, until evening. Dean Nevin pointed to a spot, which he said they could ford, but the Archbishop thought he knew by the look of the water that it would be dangerous; so they called out to attract attention. But about thirty bullock drays were drawn up in front of the house, and the cattle-drivers were drinking and making such a noise, that they could not be heard, so they gave up the attempt to cross the creek, and had to walk on another mile, where they reached a hut, and knocked at the door. The woman, thinking they were drunken men, would not let them in, and told them to be off. But, on Dean Nevin saying it was the Bishop, she opened the door,

and gave them some tea. She had no room to offer them ; so the Bishop, after all his fatigue, had to sleep outside, under a dray that was tilted up."

Another part of the letter is serious enough. She says :—

"Dear Mother has not been well, especially the last week or ten days ; though she keeps up, and will never consent to remain in bed, unless she is unable to remain up. But she was obliged to give in on Friday. I think Our Lord must help her, or she could not go through what she does. Our position here is getting very anxious. The hope of postulants seems to grow fainter and fainter. We sometimes think that the only way will be for dear Mother to go with a companion to England and Ireland to look for them herself. But how many obstacles there are to that ! I wish we were not so far away. . . ."

Neither sickness nor anxiety as to the future could hinder Mother Rose Columba from manifesting the most tender sympathy with those in trouble. One of the Sisters at St. Mary Church had written to tell her of some troubles she had been suffering. At once came a most loving and helpful reply :—

"*January 5, 1889.*—To show you how much your letter was appreciated, I am answering it at once. . . . Trials we all have, and must have, to fit us for that End. This world is a trial ground, where we must struggle for the *Crown* which is waiting for us—surely waiting—only it must be *fought* for. The fight is principally with self—though the world and the devil also have their say. Yet to be with God for all eternity—to know Him, and love Him, as we can never know and love Him here—is worth all the

struggles. I suppose most of us have much to regret in the past—time wasted, opportunities lost. Well! we can only cast the past, in loving confidence, into the mercy of God, the infinite abyss of His mercy—and, as the Curé d'Ars says—the *Future* into His Providence—the *Present* into His *love*. You, I know, my very dear Sister, will not mind my writing freely to you. I do not much care for a letter that is only a relation of local facts. Why should not Sisters write heart to heart? We have all made the same vows—have all the same End in view—why should we write as mere acquaintances might write?

“Very much good was done here by a Mission given by the Redemptorists, who established the ‘Holy Family.’ There are also Guilds that have a good influence; and I heard of *all* in the Church going to Holy Communion; and of a general Communion of 500 men every third Sunday in one of the city Churches. Plenty to pray for, and great need of Reparation.

“We cannot yet keep up (Adoration) all day, except on Sundays, and Holidays, and I hope soon to add Fridays. Until the great heat is over, we cannot have the Friday afternoon Exposition, but we keep up the Adoration. You must help us with your prayers. . . .—Ever your loving Sister,
S. M. R. COLUMBA.”

I told them that our Bishop had asked whether they would like to come back to England, and start a Convent at——. This elicited the following letter:—

“*March 16, 1889.*— — does not tempt us. To be in the diocese of Plymouth, under our old Bishop, has its attractions; and perhaps we should see you, and other old friends (who seem to forget us now), but if we can do more for the glory of God here, here we will stay, as long as we can. If the Community can tide over ten years, it will do. . . . I think his Grace finds a little comfort in us, and

I do not wish to deprive him of that little comfort. . . . A few days since, young Mr. Eaton of the Birmingham Oratory called. . . . He has gone on to Melbourne and Sydney, and intends to return in April. . . .

“I will try and get ‘The Children of Gibeon.’”

I had recommended them to read Mr. Walter Besant’s story, of which I told them the drift, she continues:—

“I remember, when I was quite young, I and my uncle going to the Opera. It was a beautiful May evening. There was the usual crush, and so the carriage had to wait for its turn; and the thought of the worldly difference between those outside the carriage and those in came home to me. I wondered why there should be that difference. But supposing all classes equal, would there be any more content and happiness? I doubt it. That the rich have positive *duty* to the poor, there is no doubt; and that money is a loan from God, not to be wasted on oneself. But look at most of those who have made their own money; who are more selfish, who more egotistical, more hard-hearted? I used to think, perhaps I do now, a large landed proprietor, with plenty of tenants well-cared for, to be the *beau ideal*. Something like Abraham—only settled—and the great Monasteries. For the great Monasteries there was fear. They did great good, and had, mostly by their own exertions, made the desert bloom; but then came riches, and ease. Abraham was safe. Then how different was his steward to a modern agent! I think Abraham was so grand in his faith and simplicity.

“Tell the dear Bishop that we cannot say things are more cheerful, but we still cling to hope. God can bring postulants; they do not appear to be here. I hope our School will flourish more next quarter. We have so much difficulty in getting in the money owed us, which makes us very short.

"*April* 28, 1889.—There is not much to say. The future still dark ; and yet a light in that darkness, the light of Hope. I daily ask St. Peter to pray for me, that my faith may not fail. One little joy. A priest has promised to establish the Holy Hour in his Church, every Thursday from seven to eight, and to burn a lamp during that time before a picture of the Holy Face. We gave him a little standing lamp. Then we take from eight to nine ; from nine to ten we have Matins, and ten to eleven is also taken by one or two of us. I hope in time to get more hours taken, so that many Acts of Love and Reparation may be offered on Thursday nights. Have you an hour in the Cathedral? If our houses joined we could do more, but I do not like the nuns to come out at night, and most of them sleep at the third house."

One of the Sisters, who had not been allowed to fast herself that Lent, gives an edifying account of the way in which it was observed by most of the Community :—

"*April* 28, 1889.—We have finished up the long hot summer by a very nice Holy Week. It was penitential enough to satisfy even Mother Margaret, as Mother Sub-Prioress said. Just before Good Friday, our Mother asked if we were willing to go back to dry bread and tea for supper, that is leaving out the preserve, for which we have had leave for some time past on Good Friday. To this we all gladly agreed ; but, as if to show that Our Lord wished the whole day to be one of penance, we had hardly made this agreement, when we were told that the Cardinal had withdrawn the permission for a little milk in the tea on Good Friday ; so there was nothing for it but to have bread and water for breakfast, bread and water for dinner, bread and water for supper, which every one had except me. And I think my penance was the worst of all, to be banished to a

room by myself, and have tea and bread and butter. Our Mother kept up wonderfully during Lent, fasting and abstaining entirely from meat; and Sister F. P. did the same, for the first time in her life. In fact, there were only four out of fourteen who did not keep the fast and abstinence; and considering that we have fish only now and then, and even that is very bad, I think the Community did very well.

"I hesitated about writing this, thinking it might be indulging in what the Bishop (Ullathorne) used to call 'Corporate pride.' But, as I did nothing myself, it can't be any harm.

"On Holy Thursday Father O'Neill gave us Holy Communion at half-past six; and, as he did not remove the Blessed Sacrament, we were able to keep up the Adoration all day and night, until six o'clock on Good Friday evening. Why can we say our prayers so much better at night? Holy Thursday was so nice: it made up a good deal for our not having a Sepulchre. I don't know that it is not better; for we have Our Lord on Good Friday, when we have no business to have Him.

In the beginning of Holy Week we had such floods of rain as has not been known in Adelaide. More rain fell in thirty hours than during the whole year; $8\frac{1}{2}$ inches I think the Archbishop said. It has done a great deal of damage, washing away railways, and houses, &c. . . . The garden is full of flowers, and there are such magnificent chrysanthemums. The Altar was beautiful for Easter, and we still have enough left to send a large basketful to St. Laurence's, and to have supplied two or three Churches besides."

Another Sister writes on May 2:—

"The future does not look very promising. Still, it is utterly impossible that dear Mother's prayers should not be

heard, and answered in some way or other. For she spends every minute that she can in the Choir, and always says she trusts in the Lord. Then, I think Sister X. is very good, and that her prayers are worth having. Whenever we are in the dismals, she says she must go and tell the Lord all about it, and ask Him what He means to do with us. . . .

"Our old gardener is really our best friend here. There is not a week that he does not bring us some little present, either a few apples, or quinces, or citrons, or some plants for the garden; and, although we pay him for one day's work each week, he often comes in when he has a few minutes to spare, and does something in the garden. . . . However, whatever our feelings may be when we have time to muse over them, we manage to be cheerful enough at Recreation time."

The year drew to a close without much more light on their prospects for the future. :

"*December 16, 1889.*—Some plants *cannot* grow if they are planted in a soil that does not suit them; and this, I sometimes think, is the case with us. Neither St. Teresa nor St. John of the Cross felt at home in Andalusia; and we may be excused for not feeling at home in Adelaide. Something seemed to say to me this morning, when I was thinking of this: 'Your work is within.' Every time we have attempted to work without, singular failure has been the result. . . . I think we shall cling to Adelaide as long as we can. If the Archbishop leaves, then I think we should have to go. I was told only yesterday by the Council that 'no one would have held on so long' as I had. This was a remark on my saying that we must not act in haste. I come to my usual request, Pray that we may know and do God's Will. We are going to begin the New Year with a novena of First Fridays for this intention. We are in the Hands of God; and He has not, and will not fail us. :

"The children are winding up their papers, and have written some very good ones. Some of the books you sent last year, too late for Christmas, are coming in usefully for rewards. Last evening the girls gave me a concert. It was their own getting up, and Mother Y. said they were so eager about it. Some of the elder ones play beautifully. There is an excellent spirit in the School."

The spring of 1890 brought them the consolation of something more definite, as will appear from the following letter. of Sister X. They had now begun to express their work of Adoration on their letters:—

ADOREMUS IN ÆTERNUM

SANCTISSIMUM SACRAMENTUM.



J. M. D.

"*April* 11, 1890.—Our dearest Mother cannot write by this mail, and she has desired me to tell you the good news, that we really are, I believe, going to begin at once to build a small Chapel, with part of the Convent attached to it. We have been asking for prayers and praying ourselves as hard as we could all this year for means to do so. . . . Is not this good news? If you only knew how we have been praying; and dear old Mother has fasted until she is almost skin and bone. But it really looks as if Our Lord was pleased, and is answering our prayers. Now we shall have to pray that He will strengthen our Mother; for since that terrible illness which she had three or four years ago, her head is easily tired, and soon begins to ache when she thinks or writes much; and there is no one else to think or plan but herself. I hope she won't lie awake all night

planning. I mean to ask the holy angels to put the right ideas into her head, and make everything go smoothly.

"April 13.—The Archbishop has just been here, and approves of our beginning at once. He says we must get all the ground-plans of the whole building, Convent and all, as it is to be, and says that he knows a good architect whom he can recommend. . . . Now that we have seen the Archbishop, and he approves of our building, it is no longer a secret, and you can speak of it to any one you please. If any one likes to send us any contributions, we shall have no objection to receive them, though Our Lord is the best to go to.

However, the building was not commenced for some time longer. It was a question whether they should pull down one of their houses and build on its site, or whether they should build somewhere else. As to the plans, Mother Rose Columba made all the designs herself, and the architect put her ideas into correct and workable form. After the Church was finished, he kindly returned her drawings to the Sisters. She had not much time for writing this year. A few extracts will show the current of her thoughts:—

"May 19, 1890.—I am so thankful that the dear Bishop is so much better. Please God he will continue so. It must have been a treat to hear him sing Mass again. . . . Do what you can to help us by speaking of us to friends, and, above all, by praying for us. I pray for you by name every day. Only room left to send most respectful remembrances to the dear Bishop, and to ask his blessing on our undertaking.

"August 26, 1890.—The day of our landing on these

shores seven years since. This morning I asked myself, what ought to be the principal intention for Holy Communion? 'Thanksgiving.' Yes; thanksgiving, the untold, and untellable trials—thanksgiving surmounts them all. What will the next seven years bring? A further manifestation of the power, wisdom, and love of God. . . . Father Plunkett, C.S.S.R., said Mass for us on Sunday. He had a little chat with us afterwards, and remarked that Reparation was greatly needed, and that a Community where the Ceremonies of the Church are carried out—Altar decorations, and all things done decently and in order is also needed—if indeed, it be not part of Reparation."

"*October 12, 1890.*—You say we shall have to suffer much before our Chapel is opened. Yes. At present, we are *experiencing* the effects of opposition, uncertainty, indifference, and inability of friends. What is more serious to us than the delay of the building is the serious—I do not like to say dangerous—illness of the Archbishop. The Dean said that he had worries enough to kill ten men. I feel uncertain whether it is *kind* to the Archbishop to pray for his recovery, so I only ask our dear Lord to give him all the helps and graces he needs:—'Well, if God is glorified, what does it matter what we suffer.' This is the usual end of all the Archbishop's (letters).

[*By Mother Sub-Prioress.*]

"Our Mother has been called away, so she will not be able to finish this before post time. . . . Dr. C. thinks our Mother looks frail, very frail, but she manages to get about. She does a great deal of fasting and abstinence, and a good many other penances besides. I think Our Lord will permit her to live long enough to see the Chapel and Convent built. . . .

"*October 20, 1890.*—I asked Mother Sub-Prioress to

finish my letter, as something took me away, and I did not see what she said, but she told me that she had given you Dr. C.'s version of me. He met me accidentally, and said he was struck, I was so altered; that if my 'running down' was not stopped, I should not live long. He came again yesterday, and was a little better satisfied. I do not feel ill, only as if I had arrived at those days which holy David calls '*Labor et dolor*.'

"All blessings on your Ordination, December 22.

"[*No date*], 1890.—The same mail that brought your letter brought also one from the Master-General, all written by himself; quite a long one too. He evidently approves of our struggles, and the desire for the Perpetual Adoration. I have asked Mother Sub-Prioress to fill this sheet, though I have plenty to say.

[*Continuation by Mother Sub-Prioress.*]

"I never saw dear Mother so pleased as she was on receiving the General's letter. I said, I hoped it would put a little colour into her cheeks. It was a most encouraging letter. The Master-General said he wished to put us into communication with a Community of Dominican nuns in New York; who, a few years ago, were in the same circumstances as we are now, and who have lately written to him, saying that they were in need of nothing, having quite sufficient members and means to keep up the Perpetual Adoration, and that they were universally respected and esteemed. It is fortunate the letter reached us, as this was the address:—

"Australia, Rev. Mere Marie Columba O.P. Porto Adelaide."

"Some one else had written,—'Try Molesworth Street.'"

The position and prospects of the Community towards the end of this year will be best explained by Mother

Rose Columba herself, in the following letter to the father of one of the Sisters :—

“November 7, 1890.—As I know you always take a kindly interest in all our doings, I am going to tell you something of our present hopes,—and, I may add, fears, though I do not like ‘fears,’ for they look like a want of trust in the merciful Providence of our good God. So I will content myself with stating facts.

“Ever since we came to Adelaide, we have seen the need, if I may say so, of a Community devoted to the special worship of our dear Lord in His Sacramental Presence, or, as we often say, a Community for God. About six years ago, we spoke of this to our Archbishop. His reply was, ‘It is my own most earnest wish.’ A few years passed, and little more was done, except to give more and more time ourselves to Adoration, and try to speak of our dear Lord to others. Our opportunities were very few. Rather more than two years since, we asked his Grace if we might hope some day to begin Perpetual Adoration. To this request he gave a most willing sanction; and gave us leave to have Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament for some hours every week. The hours of Adoration have increased, until now we are able to keep an adorer before Our Lord from 6 A.M. to 10 P.M., and often till 11 P.M. We live in three separate cottages; and that is why we cannot do more, as it would necessitate two of the said cottages being left open at night, which, of course, we could not do.

“The Chapel is a large room in one of these cottages; and although we have made it as Chapel-like as possible, still it is only a room. And now we are growing out of it. I will not say much about the heat. You, who have had experience of Indian heat, will know what heat means. We keep up the Adoration; but Exposition is impossible: the candles bend and break. At last, having had a

promise from a friend in England to help us, we are hoping to build a Church. A Chapel means part of the Convent, as we could not leave Our Lord alone. And the Archbishop having given his warm approbation, we have decided to begin early in the year.

"The friend in England naturally expects us to help ourselves, as well as to be helped; so I have written several letters, and mentioned our desire to build a Chapel of Reparation, to those whom I thought *could* help us, although we have *not* begged. The results have been extremely small so far. Bazaars, Art-Unions, Concerts, and the like are the usual way of getting money. To these means we do not wish to have recourse. They are too much used already. Our great hope is in prayer. So, please pray, and get all the prayers you can for us, for the undertaking, from a natural point of view, is extremely rash. Yet we must either stand still, or go on. If we stand still, we can only die out. If we go on, we must have space. If we put up a temporary building we only waste money; and besides, we want a Chapel less unworthy of the Divine Victim than a wooden shed. When the architect, to whom we spoke on the subject, asked how much we intended to spend at present, we replied, '£3000, though we have not £300!' He observed, 'I could put £3000 in the Chapel alone.' I hope it may be done for £1500 or £2000. Building is much more expensive here than in England, owing to the dearness of labour—10s. and 15s. per diem—and materials perhaps have to be brought from a distance.

"The Rev. Father Kenelm Vaughan is allowing us to propagate his work of Expiation. So far, though we have several names, all are of the poorer class, with about three exceptions.

"Since beginning this letter, Mr. MacDonald has promised to make us a present of the Altar."

Another Sister gives a few more particulars about the plans:—

“*November 10.*—By next Rosary Sunday we hope the Chapel will be finished. I trust we shall not be disappointed, as it cannot be begun until April. John Leahy, who is to be the builder, used to come to our School at Clifton. He has brought us specimens of pretty blue and white or yellowish stone, not at all unlike the stone used at St. Mary Church. I do not know if our Mother has told you that a lady brought with her, quite accidentally, on Rosary Sunday, a Mr Tapping, a young Catholic architect, belonging to a rising firm at Melbourne. Our Mother thinks Our Lady must have sent him to us. She gave him the plans she had herself drawn out; and from them he has sent her a very pretty design for Chapel and Convent. The Chapel is to have a small tower for bells. Only think of our ringing the Angelus three times a day! Do you think it is any wonder that we feel rather excited at the prospect before us, after living in cottages for seven years? I don't think, if we increase and multiply as we have done during the past year, since we began the Nine First Fridays, that it will be very long before we are able to have midnight Office, which, with keeping up the Adoration all night, will finish off everything.”

The same letter mentions the serious illness of Archbishop Reynolds, and the anxiety that the precarious state of his health caused to the Community. Indeed, this became now the continual cause of concern, for it seemed as though the stability of their work rested on the thread of his very uncertain life. At the same time, there does not appear, after the plans had once been put in hand, any sort of hesitation, such as

pervades the preceding letters. The following is one of the few received during the last year of Mother Rose Columba's life :—

"*February 3, 1891.*—Sunday was our Retreat day, and I took up our 'Following of Christ,' a book that was given me forty years ago by the priest of whose death I heard last week. His baptismal name I do not know; in Religion, he was Father Honorius, for when I knew him he was a Passionist. He left the Congregation, but always kept up a friendly communication with his former brothers, and was reconciled to the Congregation on his death-bed. I commend him to your prayers. He was the first Catholic priest to whom I spoke. I met him when I was visiting a poor sick Irishwoman, Nellie Holmes. Do you remember Father C.'s housekeeper, Caroline Holmes, who inquired after me? This Caroline was Mrs. Holmes' daughter. I remember how you looked up, and smiled, when I said, 'She must be getting rather old.' The smile said, 'Do you forget that you are older?' I have wandered from the 'Following.' In the said book is a letter, which I have not looked at for a long time. It is dated March 7, 1883. In that letter are my travelling orders, and these words, 'We may yet be of much use to each other;' and they set me thinking, 'Are we of any use?' Of course I could not be except by praying for you, and that I do every day; and I suppose you sometimes pray for me. But, although this is the highest 'use,' is it all the 'use?' I wonder what more those words meant. Will you think, and so will I.

"Do you remember I used to tell you Our Lord seemed to be asking something of me; and then when the Australian Foundation was proposed, you said it was *that* our dear Lord was asking. Now He seems to be asking something more. I do not know if I told you that, when I was so ill

that time (*i.e.*, in August 1885), there was a—I do not like the word ‘call,’ but I cannot think of any other just now—to a very austere life. I looked upon it rather as a dream, or weak-headedness; but when this work of Reparation seemed to grow upon us I remembered the dream. Is Our Lord calling us to a more austere life? and how? Our lives at home were far easier. I do not say this by way of disparagement, our customs allowed far more. Here, from necessity, we were obliged to live very sparingly. A fasting day’s allowance would be luxury. Until now, we are used to it, and what I say of fasting may be said of other things. Those who come to us, though not able to do much themselves at first, look for a severe Rule. And as nearly all the Religious (in Adelaide) are devoted to their neighbour, and must live accordingly, to support themselves for their work, it seems desirable that some should try to keep up the old religious spirit.

“*February 7.*—About our Chapel. One of the firm of architects was here a week since. He is not a Catholic, but easy to get on with, and most willing to carry out all that is wanted. Our building, though small, is to be the most *Conventual* in all Australia. You shall have a drawing of it, when the plans are made. Do not raise your expectations, as it is only a little Chapel. Pray that we may have the means to go on when we once begin. Our Lord can send the means when He likes.”

They seem to have had a very bright Easter. Mother Prioress arranged all the flowers on the Altar herself, and the Archbishop said Mass in their Chapel, and gave their first Communion and Confirmation to the two boys of their kind friend, Mr. MacDonald. The silver jubilee of the Sister who had charge of the Chapel was kept during the week, with a great display of painting

and work lately done by the Community, and some of which was intended for the adornment of the future cloisters of the Convent, which as yet only existed on paper. Indeed, before the week was over, their hopes received a severe check, as they were told by some priests that it was most unwise of them to build where they proposed, and Mother Prioress wrote to tell the architect to put the plans on one side. The Archbishop started on a voyage to the Seychelles Islands, in hopes of restoring his health ; and the Sisters gave themselves again to renewed prayer.

Bishop Luck, on his way to Rome, came to Adelaide, and said Mass in their Chapel on Tuesday in Easter week.

“He was delighted with the Chapel, the Altar, the flowers, the Gothic vestments, and everything, and he asked us to give him a foundation in his diocese.”

ADOREMUS IN ÆTERNUM.

J. M. D.



“*May 27, 1891.*—I shall pray, and tell Sister X. to pray for your intention. You did send her rather a ‘grumpy’ message for her Jubilee ; but she has written to you. I am writing larger than usual in consideration for your sight, which I hope is at least not worse.

“Our very best and affectionate regards and respects, please, to the dear venerable Bishop, and ask him to send a blessing across the wide ocean.

"I was very glad to hear of three novices at Teignmouth. No one has written since dear Dame Michael's death. I miss her so much, as she and Lady Abbess (Constable) were so interested in us. They were good enough to say that we three had one heart and one aim. I only wish I was anything like them.

"Two postulants were clothed yesterday. Both good subjects, and very happy and thankful for the grace of vocation. . . . It was to me a painful ceremony. The Archbishop looked like a corpse; and I was wondering whether it was for the last time.

"He has put his veto on our building at present. To all I said he answered, 'Wait.' To my own mind it is the wisest thing to do. . . . Now the dear Master is gone, we are more alone than ever. He was so kind and encouraging. I cannot tell you how much I feel his loss. I think he guessed or saw that there had been some mistakes in our regard, and felt for us. In our present difficulties I should have told him all, and he would have told us what to do. I do not think he wished us to leave Australia, and his wish to us would have been law. Besides, though there is no *human attraction*, there is *an* attraction.

"Bishop Luck said that most likely he should call at the Bishop's house (at Plymouth). I told him the dear Bishop and yourself would be interested to hear of us.

"*July 31, 1891.*—Two Jesuit Fathers called yesterday, and were *most* friendly, and said they would be only too glad to help us, *if they could*, 'but there are not many young ladies here, and the spiritual life is not appreciated.'"

The following letter will be read with interest, when it is noticed that it was written to Father Austin Maltus, O.P., the venerable priest who had received Sophy Adams into the Church nearly forty years before, and

for whom she always retained a most affectionate regard:—

ADOREMUS IN ÆTERNUM
SS. SACRAMENTUM.

“ST. DOMINIC’S PRIORY,
August 16, 1891.

“VERY REV. AND VERY DEAR FATHER,—Your most kind letter reached me about a fortnight since, and I have been *intending* to answer it as soon as possible. Every day brings its duties and its distractions; for, although we aim at the life of Mary, yet Martha is still very busy—perhaps, under present circumstances, unavoidably so. A growing child requires more attention than one who has attained its full growth. My desire has been a quiet life, where all things were in their respective grooves, and moved on day by day much in the same manner. My fate has been to work at beginnings. Stone was in a very unfinished state when the ‘Choir’ was in the aisle. Stoke was only beginning, St. Mary Church scarcely begun, and Adelaide, . . .? We have moved houses three times since we have been here; and now, when we were getting settled, we have to make another move, for the Room-Chapel is almost insupportable from its closeness, the priests feeling it even more than we do. The Archbishop has decided that we must build, and where we are. That means, take down our house and build a Chapel. The Chapel will not be done under £3000, and that a very simple one. So we depend on prayer. I remember dear Father Proctor said, when we were talking of building at St. Mary Church, ‘Ask Almighty God to put into the mind of some one who has means to help you.’ I ask you, dear Rev. Father, to pray this prayer for us, for we entirely depend on the help God gives us.

“A Redemptorist Father was here yesterday. He has given Missions in almost every part of Australia. As he came out of our Room-Chapel he said, ‘It is quite refresh-

ing to see a Chapel like this, well cared for.' This same priest said, how detrimental to all real Religious life is the 'craze,' I may call it, for education. Fasting and abstinence must go, as the Sisters' strength must be kept up. The time must be given to study and teaching. What becomes of the Rule? To my mind one of the worst features is, that girls and young persons who show an aptitude for teaching are received *to teach* with very little, if any, knowledge of the interior life.

"These things make us desire to give our time and strength to religious observances, and I do not think we shall ever aim at charitable institutions. Charitable institutions speak to the public, and are generally well supported. As of old, 'The poor you have always with you, but *Me* not always.' Last week a priest told us he had said Mass in a *purple* vestment on the feast of the Assumption, as he had no other. We gave him a white chasuble, which we had intended for Honolulu. We sent a box of Altar linen, and other requisites for giving Holy Communion, when a case was being sent from Adelaide for 'Sister Rose Gertrude.' One of the priests of the Island (of Molokai) wrote such a grateful letter to us, saying, 'Many presents were sent to the lepers, but they rarely had presents for the Altar.' I look upon it as part of our work to do what we can for the Altar, and I wish we had time and means to do a great deal more. I think our dear Lord has accepted and rewarded the little we have done.

"Do you remember, dear Rev. Father, the *old days* at Woodchester Park, when Beatrice and I were stitching at albs. You used to tell us the clock was to be our 'Monitor;' and sometimes the Monitor did not speak, or was not listened to, and then you would remind us of our duty to go into the garden? Here we take a walk in the garden only on Sunday! If it is not too hot, or too wet, or there is not Exposition, or a visitor does not come; for our walk is during the hour's recreation after dinner, and we are quite

Y

disappointed if we lose it. Those who *work* in the garden are often out, as we cannot afford a man, and do our own work. We grow nearly all our own vegetables, except potatoes, for we have only an acre of land, and this is partly covered by the four cottages. We keep the Altars well furnished with flowers. The ground will produce all the year round, if supplied with water, manure, and shade. We have a very clever lay Sister, who works in the garden with all the skill of a competent man. She also understands poultry. We keep about a hundred hens, as we depend mostly on eggs, and the fowls here lay plentifully. Fortunately we have the use of a 'paddock;' the word 'field' is never used here. It is for sale; but we are asking St. Joseph not to let it be sold as long as we want it. We do want to buy it; but that cannot be yet. £1200 is asked for the half-acre. Our four cottages have cost us rather more than £8000, *i.e.*, they *will* have cost us that, but one is not yet paid for. God's goodness and our own exertions have given them to us. People here think we are *very rich*, as we have 'so many houses,' and we do not beg. I like to think we are here *for God* (no human motive keeps us), and He will take care of us. I am sure your Reverence helps us by your prayers, and the Holy Sacrifice especially will not fail to bring us many graces.

"I have left almost to the last the little MS. book you so kindly sent. You would lift all hearts to God, to love and thank Him. We were quite surprised to see the *firm* writing, telling, I hope, of improved health. It was this day (August 23), thirty-nine years ago, that you received me into the one true Church. I often think how good God was to have chosen me. That was one of the happiest days of my life. I think our Profession Day was happier; but they were the two happiest days. Again may I say how good God is! Begging your blessing for, or on, us all, —I remain, with greatest respect, your devoted affectionate Child in Christo,

S. M. ROSE COLUMBA, O.P."

In a letter to another priest, dated August 23, she says :—

“August 23.—I find no one has written to tell you of the resolve to build. . . . The Archbishop came on the Transfiguration. After a little general talk, he said, ‘You had better do as you propose.’ I suggested architects. He did not make any objection. I then named a contractor, to whom he made some objections, and then said no more. . . . We are attempting only the shell of the Chapel, and its adjuncts—Tribune for Externs, and Sacristy ; hoping to get it done for £3000, which means debt for the rest of one’s natural life, unless a merciful Providence comes to our assistance. . . .

“The dear venerable Bishop—how I should like to see him once more ! I often think of him, and his many kindnesses. Please always offer him our affectionate regards and respects. I should like to ask him for an offering towards our Chapel, that we might put his name on the list of Benefactors to be had in Perpetual Remembrance.”

One of the Sisters writes :—

“September 27.—We are waiting impatiently for the plans for the Chapel ; but one of the architects has been ill, and Mr. Tapping is overworked, so I am afraid the first stone will hardly be laid in November, as we hoped. Our dearest Mother said the other day that, at any rate, there was no fear of our feeling elated about the building : we have had so many disappointments, and so much to dishearten us since we began to think about it. Please God, we hope it will be done soon, in spite of all the opposition which seems to rise up every time that we think we are just on the point of beginning.

“October 2.—We shall be very busy this week, making preparations for the laying of the foundation-stone. The

Archbishop is going to preach, which he is not fit for; I hope he will not suffer afterwards from the exertion. If all those who have been invited come, there will be hardly room in the road for the cabs and carriages to pass. We have to provide refreshments for about 400 people. Sister M. J. is making cakes every day for her very life. As it is very hot, there will have to be soda-water, lemonade, tea and coffee; and we have nothing to put them in; so we are borrowing anything we can get from friends. The tables are to be spread in the school-rooms."

The following account of the laying of the foundation-stone is compiled from several different descriptions sent by members of the Community.

On Sunday, November 1, All Saints' Day, the preparations were completed. The wall between two of the houses had been pulled down, and the stone itself had been got into position, and suspended by a chain from a crane all decorated with flowers. An awning had been erected for the Archbishop, and decked with flags. At half-past two, people began to arrive, and by three o'clock the verandahs and the garden were filled with a large concourse. The Mayor and Mayoress of the city were present, and Judge Bundy, and many other non-Catholics who had expressed a wish to assist at the ceremony. The Australian Hibernian Catholic Benefit Society mustered 150 strong, all wearing their green sashes, and preceded by a processional Cross. The children of Mary, with their blue ribbons, marched from St. Laurence's Church, and waited for the clergy to appear. A few minutes after three, the Archbishop

arrived, accompanied by the Dean, the Archpriest, and several other priests. They formed in procession at the Convent, and walked to the stone, which was then solemnly blessed, and lowered into its place. The Archbishop then mounted upon the stone, and gave a beautiful little sermon to the assembled people, and invited them to lay their offerings on the stone. Nearly £200 was thus offered, a very much larger sum than any one had considered probable. The refreshments seemed to be appreciated, and the assembly retired with many kind expressions of sympathy and goodwill towards the Sisters. Among those who visited the nuns on this occasion was the first officer on the *Orient*, who had been very kind to the Sisters on their voyage, and whom they were pleased to see again. The same mail which brought the accounts of the event, which has now rooted the Community to North Adelaide, brought one from Mother Rose Columba, which was the last letter she wrote to me:—

ADOREMUS IN ÆTERNUM
SS. SACRAMENTUM.



J. M. D.

"ST. DOMINIC'S PRIORY, N.A.
November 7, 1891.

VERY REVEREND AND DEAR FATHER,—You will not need a letter to tell you all I desire for you on the twenty-fifth anniversary of your Ordination; and yet, I think you will expect a letter,—at least *I* should not like the day to pass without most cordial greetings from all of us who

know you. My prayer for you, for many a long year, has been that you may be a priest according to Our Lord's own Heart, full of zeal for His glory and the salvation of souls. You will be thinking all sorts of *dismal* things about yourself—how much more you might have done, &c., &c.

"I do not call this a letter, only a few lines, not 'to show you are not forgotten'—of that, I hope, you are sure—but to add one more to the many congratulations I hope you will receive.

"I well remember Miss Randolph's visit in 1866—how she told us in the little room of the old villa, of her friend who was to be ordained on December 22. Her desire was to get prayers for you. Why should I remember that visit, and the date? I little thought then, that that friend would be for many years our Pastor and our Friend.

"Once more, desiring every best blessing for you, and assuring you of our prayers—for I hope we shall offer Holy Communion for you on that day—begging your blessing, I remain, with greatest respect, gratefully and affectionately yours in Christo,

S. M. ROSE COLUMBA, O.P."

CHAPTER XIV

ILLNESS—DEATH—LETTERS OF SISTERS— FUNERAL

IT seemed now as if the work to which Mother Rose Columba had devoted her life in Adelaide was, after these seven years of suspense, at last fairly within measurable distance of accomplishment. The Sisters were all in good spirits about it, and expected that the first two months of the coming year would see the ground cleared, and the walls of the Church rising up. The long time during which their Prioress' delicate health had been an anxiety for them, made them perhaps less apprehensive of any serious danger near at hand. One of them, in describing their preparations for the laying of the foundation-stone, mentions casually that she had tripped her foot in a root in the garden, and had had a fall which shook her very much ; but, up to the 8th or 9th of December, their thoughts were chiefly occupied with the new Church. One of them writes :—

“ *December 9.*—Our Mother has been far from well these last few days, and is very poorly to-day still. The plans have arrived at last. It is a pretty little Chapel, but not as nice as we should have liked ; but then, of course, we can only build according to our means. Now, the plans have

to be 'approved'; then, the specifications and working-plans drawn out, and tenders to be called for. So you see we shall probably have some delay even yet."

So little did Mother Rose Columba herself think that any immediate change was imminent, that she was actually contemplating a voyage to England, as the following letter shows. It was written to a lady who had been for many years a very dear friend of hers:—

"*December 6, 1891.*—What would you have said if, instead of this letter being handed in, the servant had told you that two poor nuns from Australia were asking for you? This was nearly being the case. An opportunity offered itself—a voyage to England under cheaper circumstances than usual—and a suitable lady protector—both very desirable conditions. We nearly made up our minds that some one had better go, and I was to be one of the 'some ones.' We had two days to pack; that would have been enough. 'Where will you go when you get to London?' 'Mrs. ——. I am sure she would give us a night's lodging.' But—always a 'but'—just as the building is commencing, and not permanently settled? It would not have been wise to leave. The Archbishop came the very day of the proposal; and, though he did not at once consent, did not object, and promised to let us know his decision on the following morning. Before the following morning, I came to the conclusion that it was too serious and expensive an undertaking to be done in a hurry, so I am greeting you by letter instead of in person.

"Mother Sub-Prioress says, you would not have known me. The last compliment I had paid me was, 'Your bones are coming through your face!' Bones or not, I think you would have known me. There is something

that speaks more than flesh or bones, and perhaps before many months we shall have the opportunity of speaking. Our two objects in going to Europe would be to get certain permissions in Rome; for, although we have the leave of the late dear Master-General (who was the kindest of Fathers to us), and of the Archbishop of Adelaide for Perpetual Adoration, yet it is not formally approved by Rome; and this is necessary for stability, especially in these Colonies. Another object will be to get suitable postulants, if possible. Vocations are rare.

"I do not know why I am tiring you with this long dissertation. At first I intended telling you of our possible sudden appearance. I think you go abroad in August; so it will be of no use to ask for a night's lodging then. If we come, it will probably be before July."

In a letter written two days after this, one of the Sisters tells of the proposed voyage, and says: "She is very weak, and far from well. She gets chill after chill. The changes from intense heat to positive cold are so sudden." Still she seems more anxious about the Archbishop, who, she says, "is laid up again with an attack on his lungs. It seems very doubtful that he will get through next winter. We are delighting ourselves with the Autobiography of Archbishop Ullathorne. Our dearest Mother has sent a copy of it to the Archbishop, to cheer him in his illness; he will enjoy it so." Another Sister writes:—

"*December 12.*—Our dear Mother is laid up, and we have had to have the doctor. He thinks it may be influenza. She was *very* bad yesterday, and you may be sure we are anxious about her.

"*December 13.*—The doctor has found out what is the

matter with our dear Mother, and so we hope will be able to do her good. Of course, she will not be up for some time, though we hope she will be better for Christmas."

The next day another Sister says: "That terrible pain came on in her head, and she said her brain seemed on fire." On Friday, December 17, she became so much worse, and when Dr. Cawley came he said it was very serious, though there was no danger for that night. The next morning the Dean, Dr. Kennedy, gave her all the last Sacraments, fearing she would die while he was administering them. After Extreme Unction the pain became easier, but left her in a state of complete exhaustion. A letter sent from Adelaide on December 29 says: "She has been hovering ever since last Tuesday (December 22) between life and death. Last night the doctor saw her at midnight, and said she might live till morning. We are so thankful there is no School going on now. All through the Midnight Mass (at Christmas) you could hear, mingling with the Dean's voice, our darling Mother's moans, for her room is opposite to the Chapel. . . . The Archbishop is so good and kind, and numbers of Masses and prayers are being daily offered throughout the diocese."

Long before any of these letters reached their destination, the electric cable had brought to us in England the fatal telegram:—

*"Mother Rose Columba died this morning.
MacDonald. Adelaide. 30th."*

Then, one by one, the letters came, telling of illness, and then of danger; and, lastly, after February 1892 had well begun, came the following heart-piercing details of the end:—

“ST. DOMINIC’S PRIORY,
NORTH ADELAIDE, *January 3, 1892.*”

“VERY REV. AND DEAR FATHER,—It is all over now. Our best, dearest, sweetest of mothers is gone for ever. We shall never, never see her again, and we are left to struggle on, all alone in Australia; not alone, for we have Our Lord, and she is helping us in Heaven, or we should have been utterly crushed by this blow; for we hoped on till the very day before she died, and thought Our Lord would almost have worked a miracle, sooner than take away the only one we had to lean on. We had put up a picture of Our Lady of Perpetual Succour in the Sanctuary, and burned a lamp and candle before it day and night, and made a novena; but, on the last day of the novena, Our Lady took her away. She was her patroness for last year. We thought we could never again go through such an illness as that which our dearest Mother had six years ago; but this last was far more painful, and tore our very hearts asunder. I used to look up to Our Lady and ask her, how she could see our Mother’s face of agony, and hear her moans, and not send her some relief. Dr. Cawley could not give her morphia, for he said she would never wake from it, and he could only try mild things, which often had no effect. The fever was so high that she had no rest day or night; and one, and often two, of us remained constantly by her to keep her in bed. Sometimes we put her in a chair, hoping she would have more rest there; but the fever made her bound from side to side, and her heart was jumping so that you could almost hear it—her pulse was 136. She never spoke from Monday the 21st, except, sometimes, I thought

I could hear her saying 'Jesus,' 'Mary.' After she had received the Last Sacraments on Saturday 19th, Mother Sub-Prioress noticed her looking very earnestly at the Dean, who had returned to her room after replacing the Blessed Sacrament in the Tabernacle. She held out her hand to him, and said very sweetly, 'Thank you very much.' She had been unable to go to confession, but the Dean said it was quite sufficient to leave him alone with her for a few minutes. She was quite conscious then, and held out her hands herself for the holy oils. For twenty hours or more before her death she lay perfectly still, without moving even her hand; and, just before she died, she opened her eyes wide and looked up. The last breath was so gentle that we did not know she was gone, till the Dean, who was with her and had given the last absolution, began the prayers for the departed. I am certain that, though half unconscious, she knew us: for when we said to her, 'Sweet Mother, do you know us?' she half opened her eyes, and gave us such a look. But it was very sad not to hear one single word from her. When she was taken ill, she was thinking very much of a man for whom she had been asked to pray. He ought to be a Catholic, but is dying, and is being, by his own desire, attended by a Protestant minister. When her pain was beginning to get very very bad, we were proposing to have a Mass said in honour of the Sacred Heart for her relief; she was pleased, but added, 'What about Mr. —? ought I not to bear the pain for his soul?' My heart sank when I heard her say this. Dr. Cawley was most attentive, coming three times a day; he did all he could. The second, a Dr. Poulton, was also very kind. But Our Lord saw she was ready for heaven, and has taken her in spite of all the Masses and prayers which were said for her. We are very desolate: it is like a dreadful dream, and has come so suddenly, that we feel stunned by it. Our Lord must have helped us, or we never could have gone through it. The Dean said it was a very holy, but a very painful death;

and that hers was the grandest soul he ever knew. The Archbishop was quite stunned, as he would not believe she was dying till the very last. He nearly broke down at the Requiem Mass, which was at 10 o'clock on Thursday morning. There were more than twenty priests present at it. The funeral was immediately after. Our sweetest Mother is buried in the cemetery, close to the Chapel, by the side of S. M. Erminilda. We are hoping and praying that, when the Chapel is built, we may be able to get leave to remove her, and have her amongst us again.

"I cannot tell you how kind the MacDonalds have been. I do not know what we should have done but for them. When Mr. MacDonald saw our dearest Mother after her death, and knelt by the side of the coffin, he sobbed out loud, and also his wife. Poor Rally, their little boy, whom Mother was very fond of, cried all the time of the funeral. They are coming this afternoon, with the Archbishop's leave, to take Sister F. Philomena and Sister M. Rose to Glenelg, to spend a week or ten days at the sea ; it will do them both good. I think every one, Protestant and Catholic, in Adelaide is sorry for our dearest Mother's death. On the day of the funeral, all the shops in O'Connell Street were half closed, and she has been very nicely spoken of in the papers. Sister Martha devoted herself the whole day that our Mother was laid out in the library, standing by the remains and brushing off the flies, and she did it so reverently. Our Mother looked very sweet after death, but it was not like her own face. Mr. MacDonald had her photographed after death ; we will send some to England. Your letter, enclosing a donation for the Chapel, arrived at the very beginning of her illness. When M. Sub-Prioress told her it had come, she said it must wait for a day or two, hoping that she would be well, but she was too ill to attend to anything. What pleasure it would have given her ! Nothing seemed to please her so much as a donation for the Chapel. We think she offered her life as a sacrifice,

she certainly fasted for it. She hurried on the laying of the foundation-stone, as if she was afraid of not living; and yet she spoke of many things she meant to do; and she intended, if possible, to go to England after Easter; but she felt she was failing, and constantly complained of being 'so tired.' All we can do now is to cleave together, and do the best we can, and try to live as she would wish us, that we may join her in heaven. The Archbishop wished the election to take place at once; so he came this morning, and said the Mass of the Holy Ghost, after which M. Sub-Prioress was elected Prioress. We are all resolved to keep our Rule, and do our best to struggle on, and leave all the rest to Our Lord and our sweet Mother, whom He has taken away to Himself in heaven. Pray for us, for we are very desolate. The only nice place now is the Chapel. Pray for our new M. Prioress: she has a hard time before her, but Our Lord will help her. We are going to send you something belonging to our dearest Mother. I should like to write to St. Mary Church, but cannot.—Asking your blessing, I remain, very Rev. and dear Father, with a very heavy heart, your affectionate and grateful child in Jesus,
"X."

Other letters all breathe the same spirit of intense grief at the loss of their beloved Mother, and yet the same sweet resignation and firm confidence in God. The new Prioress writes:—

"*January 5, 1892.*—We are stunned, crushed, and heart-broken, at the departure of our dearest Mother. We can only say, May God's holy Will be done. Yet we are quite certain that dear Mother is helping us. There is a feeling of peacefulness and resignation throughout the House, and every one is doing her duty. . . . The Chapel of Reparation has been her one absorbing thought for the last eighteen

months; and she has fasted, and denied herself even the necessaries of life, and done great penance to obtain the funds to build it. I have not the slightest doubt now but that it will be built, and that will be the best Memorial we can give her.

"*February 1, 1892.*—She never told any of us that Our Lord had given her the choice of living or dying during her first illness here. If she had died then,¹ we should have gone back to England, and she would have left no work behind her. But now our one desire is to carry on her work, particularly all that regards the Perpetual Adoration. . . . You cannot imagine how dearest Mother increased in holiness and perfection during the last few years of her life. We all felt lately that she was too holy to live much longer, yet we had not the least idea she was going so soon. Eleven times every day she visited the Blessed Sacrament. This includes Office. Four times every day she took the *prie-dieu* for Adoration, and the other times she used to kneel at the Communion-rail. She rarely sat down, and very seldom used a book. Her reverence in the Choir was something beautiful; and she had a personal love for Our Lord. She always helped to put away the things for Mass and Benediction, and it made one feel good only to look at her. Her spiritual duties always came first; and, whenever they were interrupted by necessary business, she stayed up at night till she had fulfilled them all. She always adored from ten till half-past, except when she was too ill, and had to go to bed. She was a perfect Superior. She overlooked every office, and every individual: nothing escaped her vigilance. She was very strict, yet everybody loved her. Her mortifications were far beyond her strength. She wore chains round her waist, and on her arm, and sometimes took the discipline with a chain. She abstained always, and fasted the greater part of the year. I, who have

¹ See p. 260.

known her so long, watched her give up one after another every little comfort that she was allowed on account of her delicate health, until she scarcely permitted herself the bare necessities of life. She was such a lover of holy Poverty, that she gave away almost everything that she had to her use; so that, after her death, when we put all her things together, they were barely enough for us each to have something that she had used. I have got her *Diurnal*, which was used also by Mother Margaret.

"Although she spent so much time in the Chapel, she never neglected a single duty. She took an interest in everything, the garden, the fowls, &c.

"The Archbishop was here nearly every day during the latter part of dearest Mother's illness; and as soon as she was dead, he telegraphed to every priest in the diocese to say Mass for her on the 31st, and come to her funeral.

"Dearest Mother left the Community in a state of strict observance, and I am terrified, now that her watchful eye is no longer upon us visibly, that we shall degenerate little by little. It is almost miraculous how she has helped us so far. We are going to receive three Choir postulants to-night. There are also some new children in the School."

Another Sister writes:—

"There was never such a sweet, lovable, holy Mother: nobody will ever take her place; but Almighty God was very good to have left her with us so long. She laid the foundation-stone, and that settled us in Australia. The plans for building are all prepared, and everything thought of, even up to the Consecration of the Chapel, and opening day. . . . All that is left for us now, is to try and walk in her footsteps, and serve Our Lord as faithfully as she did, and do our best to carry on her work—her special work in Australia—the Perpetual Adoration."

Yet another of the Community says :—

“We have much to be thankful for, in having had such a beautiful example before us for so many years. A great change came over her character since her illness six years ago. It seemed as though Our Lord had lent her to us for a little longer, and during that time she herself was drawing nearer and nearer to God. There appeared less of *nature* about her, from day to day. Indeed I had often remarked, that she seemed getting so close to Almighty God, that I was afraid He would take her altogether. If our dearest Mother had the power of drawing others to herself, it was only that she might lead them also nearer to Our Lord. We cannot think of her but as of something so beautifully reverent. You might see her from morning till night, and from night till morning, and there was not the slightest movement that was not recollected and religious. I never knew any one who had such perfect control of herself. I had the privilege of being one of those who nursed her night and day during her last illness, and was with her the night before she died, and did not leave her until all was over. *R.I.P.*”

One of the Community, who had seen more of the world than the others, thus expresses her own thoughts about it nearly four months afterwards :—

“*April 24.*—To say that we miss our dearest Mother does not express it. At first, it was quite terrible. One seemed to see her in her favourite spot, kneeling at the Altar-rail, rapt in prayer. This was her favourite place; and hour after hour she would kneel there; and always far into the night, when every one else was in bed. On an Exposition day, she would spend almost the entire day in Chapel, unless she was called out to go to the Guest-room.

“Before her illness came on, I do not think she had any presentiment of death. A few weeks before, I was sitting

Z

with her in her room, and talking of something that troubled me, and she helped me very much. And then I said, 'Oh, dear Mother, whatever should I do without you? You always manage to say the right thing about everything: don't you go and die yet awhile; that would be too dreadful to think of!' It struck me just then that she looked so fragile and worn. I think I cried a little when I said it. She answered in her sweet way, 'Don't be so foolish, child, I am not going to die yet; Our Lord won't take me, for my work is not finished.' Another time, when she spoke of death, and her work not being finished, at recreation we said, 'If you are going to die when the Chapel is completed, we would far rather that it was never begun.' Dear old Mother! For *her* sake I am glad the Lord thought differently to what she did, and He considered her work was done.

"I often think she may have thought she was going to die when her illness first began. One evening she sent for one or two of us separately, just to give us her blessing, and say a little word. I knelt down by her bedside. I thought she looked very bad, and said so to her. She said, 'I am better than I was, but I still feel very poorly.' I said that we missed her dreadfully all about the house, at recreation, and in Choir. She answered, rather impressively I thought, 'You must get accustomed to that.' A fear seized upon me then that she was perhaps going to die, and from that time I thought she would die.

"I often think over that sad time. Our Lord must have helped us, given us wonderful help then, and *since* too, for we went on with all our Community duties as regularly as possible; nothing was changed in any way: and even on the day of her death all went on as exactly as possible—just as *she* would have wished it. I was so struck with the difference between 'death in Religion' and 'death in the world.' I mean, the self-restraint and perfect submission to God's will in the former, and the selfish wrapping oneself up in

grief which so often follows after the death of one very dearly beloved. I was greatly edified by the way this sorrow was borne by those who had lived with our dearest Mother the greater part of their lives. It must have been a crushing blow : and yet, the one thought was to be brave for the sake of others, and to go on, and do in everything what our dearest mother would desire.

“I think dear Mother is very near to us sometimes. I like to think she is in Choir with us. No one could be ever like her again. She had such a wonderful power of attracting souls ; and one felt all the time that her love for us was so different (to that of others). It was always *in God, and for God*. Perhaps we loved her too much, and leaned more on her than was good for our souls—at least I think *I* did. Many and many a time I have gone in to her, feeling in the depths of misery, and as if I could never be happy again ; and I have come out a different being, after one of her little talks ; so wise, and so helpful to each and all.”

Similar forebodings of the end seemed to have come across other Sisters. Thus one of them writes :—

“Sister X. and Sister Y. and I used to make our spiritual reading in her room ; and we were reading the Bible, just about the time when the plans were going on, and our dear Mother was thinking about the stained-glass window, and the door of the Tabernacle. We had just come to the part about David wishing to build a Temple to the Lord. She seemed rather low ; and we picked out everything we could to encourage her, and told her to ‘act like a man and take courage’ and ‘build a sanctuary to the Lord,’ and other verses. I remember it so well. She was sitting by her window, just opposite to the crimson passion-flower, working at Mr. MacDonald’s altar [cloth], which she was never to finish. And she said, ‘David got everything ready, and prepared all the charges.’ It went through me, for I knew

what she meant ; but I could not believe that she would die, and put it out of my head."

Another Sister describes the same incident, and adds :—

"She was very anxious to begin our Chapel of Reparation ; but whenever we alluded to the building, she would bow down her head, and cover her face with her hands and groan. She seemed to dread beginning 'bricks and mortar' again. . . . In order to encourage dear Mother, we printed out and framed, and hung up in her room :

'THE LORD BE WITH THEE, AND DO THOU PROSPER, AND
BUILD THE HOUSE TO THE LORD MY GOD.'

'ARISE, AND BE DOING, AND THE LORD WILL BE
WITH THEE.'

'GIVE YOUR HEARTS AND YOUR SOULS TO SEEK THE
LORD YOUR GOD ; AND ARISE, AND BUILD A
SANCTUARY TO THE LORD GOD.'

'NOW THEREFORE SEEING THE LORD HATH CHOSEN THEE
TO BUILD THE HOUSE OF THE SANCTUARY ;
TAKE COURAGE, AND DO IT.'

'ACT LIKE A MAN, AND TAKE COURAGE, AND DO ; FEAR
NOT, AND BE NOT DISMAYED. FOR THE LORD MY
GOD WILL BE WITH THEE, AND WILL NOT LEAVE THEE,
NOR FORSAKE THEE, UNTIL THOU HAST FURNISHED
ALL THE WORK FOR THE SERVICE OF THE HOUSE OF
THE LORD.'

"She did indeed get everything ready ; and had planned everything, even to the day of the opening ; where we were to sit, and where the visitors for the occasion were to be ; and had even chosen the Mass that we were to learn to sing.

"All the money that came in was shown to her, and she made a special thanksgiving for every pound that came into

the house. Whenever an unexpected gift came, she would take it into the Chapel and show it to Our Lord, and tell Him how she was going to spend it for Him. We have had a Church-bag for some years; and we put whatever money we could spare into it; and when we had a few pounds in it, dear Mother used to spend it in getting something for our own Chapel, or for some poor Mission. Lately we have been saving to pay for the Stalls for the new Choir. Dear Mother took all the Donations for the Church, and said we must earn what we required for our daily expenses."

Many incidents in Mother Rose Columba's life in Adelaide, which show her spirit better than any panegyric can do, have since been related by her Sisters. She was a true child of Mother Margaret.

"Our Mother was very devoted to Mother Margaret, and she established many of her old customs in this Community which had been dropped in England. She always kept a photograph of her on the chimney-piece in her room, and used often to kiss it. I always kept two little vases of flowers before it for her. I sometimes think of their meeting in heaven, and what a pleasure it must have been to both of them to see each other again."

The following reminiscence of their early days at Adelaide exhibits that joyous spirit of penance which was one of the most striking characteristics of St. Dominic. It also shows her zeal for the beauty of the House of God, and for all that concerned the Blessed Sacrament:—

"When we first came to Adelaide, dear Mother was very anxious to do something to improve a School-Chapel. The Altar and Tabernacle were (as is often the case) enclosed in the form of a cupboard during the week. She sent two

of us a rather long walk to paper the back of the wall behind the Altar, and got leave to have the Tabernacle brought to the Convent. We gilded and decorated it. When finished, dear Mother and myself put the Tabernacle into a clothes-basket, and we set off on foot to carry it between us.¹ Somehow or other we could not find the School-Chapel, and walked about for several miles. We went round and round Adelaide without being able to find it, and once arrived at the foot of the hills. The basket with the Tabernacle in it was very heavy; and, as our hands were engaged, we could not hold up our umbrellas, and the sun was streaming on us all the time. But the more our arms ached, and the more tired we were, the more delighted dear Mother was. She was so glad to do and suffer something for Our Lord. She often referred to this long and round-about walk; and said she thought Our Lord meant us to make this procession, and take possession of the ground, and prepare it for the Perpetual Adoration.

"On another occasion, she was very dreadfully distressed that a country Chapel had no Sacristy, and that the priest had to vest and unvest in the sanctuary in a very public manner. The brooms, oil-cans, &c., were kept in the sanctuary: £30 would build a sacristy, so £30 must be scraped together. But what could we do? We were poor enough ourselves. We must deprive ourselves, and work hard. So dear Mother and many of the Community entirely gave up the use of butter, and did without many other things besides; and by dint of painting at recreation, and working hard, she managed to get together the much desired sum. Of course she kept all this private, and what she intended to do was only known amongst ourselves. Circumstances, however, arose unexpectedly which prevented her carrying out her first intention, and the sum did not go to that particular Mission, but was divided, and given for the benefit of two other Chapels."

¹ See p. 241.

Her industry and her love of holy Poverty may be illustrated by the following incident :—

“It was wonderful how much work dear Mother managed to get through for the Church. She always had something on hand, either an alb, or altar-cloth ; and when not in the Chapel, or otherwise engaged, would work away, while seeing and talking to the Religious or the novices when they went to her room. She was engaged on an altar-cloth when taken ill. One day, at the beginning of her illness, I was with her, and she wished to get up, and sit for a little while in her chair. She was too weak to walk alone, so I helped her across the room to the window, then put wraps round her, and propped her up with pillows. She remained quite silent for some time, and then said, ‘Go to our cabin-box (we have no presses in our cells ; the only bit of furniture that we can boast of are the cabin-boxes we used on the voyage, and have made use of ever since), and in this end of it you will find our work ; take the needle out of it, for it will get rusty !’ This told me that she must have expected a long illness.

“One day, at recreation, when we were saying how impossible it was to get enough money for the Chapel, she said : ‘Well, if I go, there is the money.’ We scolded her, and said she was not to think of such a thing, that we would rather go on as we were till the end of our lives than have a Chapel without her. I firmly believe she offered her life for the Chapel. If she did, we shall be quite sure to have it, whatever difficulties may arise.”

Her ardent love for souls was manifested to the last, in her offering her pain for the conversion of a young man who was dying without the sacraments, and refused to see a priest. Nothing was heard of him at

the time, but her prayers and sufferings were not in vain. The same sister writes :—

“ I think I told you in my last letter that, in the beginning of her illness, she offered her pain for the conversion of one who had been a Catholic, but who was dying attended by a Protestant minister. His sister had very little hope of his conversion. Sister Z. wrote to her to tell her of our Mother’s illness, and mentioned that she had offered her pain for her brother’s soul. She gave him the letter to read, and he replied, ‘ It is very kind of Mother Rose Columba to pray for me ; but I don’t want to be converted.’ We heard no more until a few days ago, when Mother Prioress had a letter from his sister, saying that her brother had died on Wednesday, the 10th of February. The Sunday before, he had made his confession, and had been anointed. He could not receive Holy Communion, as his jaws had been locked for two months. The day before his death, he had been received into the Scapular ; so she had every reason to hope that his soul was saved. One night he said to his sister, ‘ Sister Rose Columba ’ (he had never seen her) ‘ has been on duty with you all night, looking after me.’ His sister said he was light-headed, and saw all sorts of people. But perhaps our sweet Mother *did* help him : she was feeling so much for his sister having no one to help her to nurse her brother, and having to sit up night after night.

“ This is Holy Week, and we are missing dearest Mother at every turn. She taught us how to spend the Holy Week well, as we are not able to have any of the ceremonies of the Church. Each day she planned out ; and all that was done each year was written down, in order to be a guide for the following year. So now we know exactly what to do ; and I can assure you she was not sparing in penitential exercises. But all was forgotten when, on Easter Sunday morning, we all went into her room after breakfast, and kissed her, and knelt round her, and looked at her beautiful

face, while she talked to us for a short time. Then she would stand up and say, 'It is time for us to go and say our prayers.' God help us this Easter Sunday! I expect it will be a meeting of tears."

After her death the Sisters found a little bag, which she always wore fastened round her neck. It contained a small brass cross, some medals, a relic of St. Catherine, an emblem of the Sacred Heart, some things that had belonged to Pope Pius IX., and the following prayer in Father Albert Buckler's writing:—

"I beseech Thee, O Eternal Father, in the Name of Thy Son Jesus, to take into Thy hands the free-will which Thou hast bestowed upon me, and of which I now divest myself. I abandon it entirely and unreservedly to Thy holy disposal, in order that it may please Thee. And I beseech Thee, by the Precious Blood of Thy Son, that it may never be left at my disposal, to do anything contrary to Thy Will."

Christian virgins are not Stoic philosophers, and they have the highest example for mourning the loss of their beloved ones, though they are forbidden to "sorrow as others who have no hope" (1 Thess. iv. 12). Few who have human hearts will blame their tears. If there be any who feel disposed to find fault with them for expressing their grief, or with him who here records those expressions, we may reply with St. Augustine: "Read it who will, and interpret it how he will; and if he finds sin therein that I wept for my mother, who for the time was dead to mine eyes, let him not deride me; but rather, if he be one of great charity, let him weep himself for my sins unto

Thee, the Father of all the brethren of Thy Christ”
(*Conf.* ix. 33).

One of the Adelaide papers says:—

“On Thursday, the day of the funeral, there were many manifestations of grief over the event that had deprived the Dominican Order of one of its brightest ornaments. The funeral took place at the Catholic cemetery at Adelaide. The Dominican nuns, who keenly feel the loss of their Superioress, recited Matins prior to the arrival of the Archbishop and his priests. A solemn Requiem Mass was sung by Archbishop Reynolds, followed by the usual absolutions. The obsequies took place in the presence of a large number of the Catholic clergy from different parts of the colony, and of ladies and gentlemen prominently connected with the Church. The coffin, covered with most beautiful wreaths, was borne from the Convent to the hearse, and a procession formed up and proceeded to the cemetery at a quarter-past eleven. Immediately behind the hearse were three mourning coaches with the clergy, and a number of carriages conveying laymen of the Church and others. As the *cortège* passed St. Patrick’s Church, West Terrace, the residence of the Archbishop, the church bell was tolled, and, on reaching the cemetery, the coffin was conveyed to the Smyth Memorial Chapel, where the Archbishop and his chaplain were waiting, and where the *Miserere*, &c., were said. At the grave the coffin was sprinkled by the Archbishop, who also pronounced the customary absolution. The remains of the deceased were placed in the same grave as those of the late Sub-Prioress, Mary Erminilda Joyce, O.P., who accompanied the Rev. Mother to Adelaide.”

REQUIESCAT IN PACE!

CHAPTER XV

THE COMMUNITY AFTER HER DEATH

Objects which Mother Rose Columba had chiefly at heart—The Building of the Church—The Increase of the Community—Fulfilment of both—Death of Archbishop Reynolds—Completion and Solemn Opening of the Church—Lesson of the Life.

ANY memoir of the founder of a religious work must be imperfect if it concludes with the founder's death. All those whom God calls to establish permanent institutions in His Church participate after their measure in their likeness to Him of whom the Evangelist has said: "All things which Jesus *began* to do and to teach, until the day on which He was taken up."¹ When St. Dominic was dying, and his Friars were in deep sorrow, he comforted them, saying, "Weep not, I shall be of more use to you where I am going than I have been here." The spiritual children of Mother Rose Columba had not the consolation of hearing any such words from the lips of their dying Mother, and yet events proved that they were true disciples of this faithful daughter of St. Dominic. She had laboured hard, and had suffered much; and yet, when she died, her work seemed to have been only just commenced. From the time when she was able to see that God had called her to set up the Perpetual Adoration of the Blessed Sacra-

¹ Acts i. 1, 2.

ment in Adelaide, her prayers and penances had been offered for two main objects—first, the erection of a suitable Church where Our Lord could be duly honoured; and, secondly, a sufficient number of postulants to enable the Adoration to be properly kept up. It seemed impossible that either of these objects could be attained without the personal presence of her, who had been, more than is usually the case, the life and soul of the Community. In all their previous difficulties they had had her strong spirit to lean upon, her unwavering hope to encourage them, and her exquisite tact to steer them through the perplexities which surrounded them. Now that she was gone, it would have been hardly wonderful if they had regarded the situation as hopeless, and had returned to England. Yet such a thought does not seem to have occurred to them. Their one idea was to carry on, as well as they could, the work that she had left unfinished, to keep alive the spirit of penance and strict observance which she had implanted in the Community, and expect with fearless confidence that help from God which they could no longer have from the beloved Mother, whom He had taken to Himself.

This chapter will show how that confidence was not misplaced.

At the time of Mother Rose Columba's death the foundation-stone of the Church had been laid, but the plans had been entrusted to an architect at Melbourne, and considerable delay occurred before they could be put into working order. She had made numerous sketches of what she wished, but when the plans and

specifications arrived early in March 1892, they wrote sadly, "We have not got our dearest Mother to see about them." However, a gentleman, who was a friend of the late Prioress, and who knew what her ideas were, undertook to see to them, and found a local architect, Mr Woods, to attend to them. Thus they were able to write on

"*May 10.*—The foundations of the Chapel are being dug now. They commenced on the 2nd of May, and the building is under our Blessed Lady's special protection. The architect at Melbourne, at our request, has returned to us all dear Mother's sketches and plans, which we shall keep as great treasures. John Leahy is the contractor. He was at school at Clifton, and made his First Communion in the Chapel [of St. Catherine], and used to serve Mass and Benediction there. He loves Clifton very much, and looks back with great pleasure to the day of his First Communion; so I think he will do his best for us."

The foundations were filled with concrete, which took some time to harden, before the men could begin the actual building. However, in June they were able to report:—

"The Chapel is appearing above the foundations, and will be a beautiful little building. It is built mostly of a yellowish stone from Murray Bridge, relieved with white. Mr. Leahy set several men to work yesterday to finish a little piece that we might see it. . . . Two years ago, I asked Father O'Neill to pray that we might get £5000 to build a Chapel; and he answered, 'God love you, Sister! Tell me to pray for something reasonable.' How little we knew the way it would come!"

It had been supposed that the Chapel could be built for £4000, but the estimate was nearly £6000, and it

came at last to £8000, as labour is so expensive in Australia. In fact, it would have reached a higher figure still, but that work was scarce just at that time. The present writer had proved their late Mother's will for them, and every penny of her fortune was devoted to the Church. I could not refrain from saying that if I had been their Temporal Father, I should not have allowed them to spend it all in building. The following reply was sent :—

"*September 12.*—You say that if you had been our Temporal Father, you would not have let us spend all the money on the Church. I think, if you had been one of dear Mother's children, and had seen her longing desire to give our Lord a better House than He generally has in Australia; and had seen the way in which she deprived herself of everything she could possibly do without, in order to save money to make the Church more beautiful, you would have done what we are doing. I hope Our Lord will provide for the future. The door of the Tabernacle [from Hardman's] is beautiful. Dear Mother would have been so pleased with it. She sent the precious stones for it, and her designs have been carried out. Miss —— has generously sent £30 for it."

The work went steadily forward, and on January 1, 1893, they were able to write :—

"The Chapel is nearly roofed in. The Archbishop says it is a young Cathedral. It is built on a high ground, so that it can be seen from a great distance, though the Campanile is not above the roof yet. The Stalls are to be of a very dark wood, and we are going to polish them ourselves, to save £20 or £25. The archpriest, Dr. Nevin, has promised to give the bell."

The dean and the priests of Adelaide generously united to give the large window in the Lady Chapel, and the architect and the contractor each gave one of the small windows. Some German artists had recently opened works in Adelaide for making stained glass, and all these windows were made by them; and some thought they quite rivalled the colouring of the east window, which had come out from Hardman's. This latter was from Mother Rose Columba's own design, and represents the Adoration of the Lamb, but instead of the Lamb, Our Lord is represented in human form, seated under a canopy, and adored by saints and angels. Later on, when the Church was finished, and had been opened, the Governor, Lord Kintore, was so pleased with it that he most kindly offered to contribute half the expense of the window in St. Dominic's chapel.

We must leave the building of the Church for a time, and see how the other and still more important desire of Mother Rose Columba was also being fulfilled at the same time. Immediately after her death, a young lady, who had come out from Ireland to stay at the Convent a little while before the illness of the Prioress, offered herself as a postulant. In March 1892 the new Prioress wrote, speaking of the late Rev. Mother:—

"We seemed to be taking a fresh start. There were two or three postulants in the near future, and the plans all in preparation for the building. The postulants and plans have arrived, and there is no Mother to see them. Yet, we have much to be grateful for. For, although we are sad, we feel that we are being well looked after in heaven. . . . Is it not strange that we are getting such nice postulants just after dearest Mother has left us? She must be sending them.

"July 18.—We had our first Profession without dearest Mother on the Feast of Our Lady of Mount Carmel. Two were professed, and they seem very happy. Four postulants are going to be clothed on the 2nd of August."

It cannot be an easy life for young people accustomed to all the unrestrained freedom of the Colonies, and it is no wonder that some of those who had offered themselves in all sincerity found, after a few weeks of experience, that the life was not suited to them. Thus we are told in October that one of these novices is about to leave; and in November another letter says: "As she went out of one door a postulant came in at another, so we are twenty-two as we were before."

But, while these signs of Divine protection and favour were giving them encouragement, another heavy blow was awaiting them in the illness and death of their kind Father and friend, Dr. Reynolds, the Archbishop of Adelaide. His health had been failing for years, but he had so frequently rallied, that it was only when he was very near his end that they realised that he was really dying. But a letter says:—

"May 4, 1893.—Our Easter has been a sad one, for the Archbishop is dying slowly. Last Tuesday they thought he would not pass the night, but he is still alive. He has all his senses about him, and his head is perfectly clear, and he has been able to arrange everything, even the very vestments in which he is to be laid out. He is to be buried at Cabra with the other Dominican nuns. I think our Mother told you about his having given us his Consecration Chalice. Since then he has sent us a very beautiful Monstrance, very like that at St. Mary Church, and the Pyx is arranged in the same way. It is two hundred years old; it is a real relic.

. . . I wonder who will consecrate our Chapel now. His Grace told Mr. MacDonald that he would have liked so much to consecrate the Altar himself; indeed he meant to do the whole, though we used to wonder how he would have the strength to get through such a long ceremony. . . . The Cardinal (Moran) was here on his way to Rome. He was very friendly, and not at all formidable. He went to see the Chapel, and said it would be a little gem. He admired the window from Hardman's very much. One of the priests who came with the Cardinal told us that the Memorial window to Archbishop Vaughan in the Cathedral at Sydney was done by Hardman, is as large as the arch of our sanctuary, and cost £1900.

"The Archbishop sent one of his priests this morning (the 9th) for our Mother and Mother Sub-prioress. He told them he thought the end could not be very far off now, but he is dreading his agony, and said to Mother Prioress, 'Oh, don't leave me long in Purgatory.' He sent us all his blessing. It will be very sad when he is gone."

The Archbishop, however, lingered until June 12. An interesting notice of his Grace in the *Tablet*, July 22, gives the following particulars:—

"During the past couple of years Dr. Reynolds was never in perfect health; and in order to strengthen himself to go through the office of Holy Week he took a trip to Mount Barker. There he caught a cold which shook his whole frame. The primary disease of diabetes with chronic Bright's disease developed. Consumption set in, and this, coupled with dropsy and heart disease, carried off the Prelate. His Grace bore his sufferings, which at times were intense, with the greatest fortitude. Dr. O'Connell was in attendance night and day on the late Archbishop, and in recognition of his unremitting attention to him he placed the ring he received when he was made Bishop of Adelaide on the doctor's finger. On the Saturday (June

10) Dr. Reynolds passed a very bad night, and seeing that the end was near, the Apostolic Benediction was pronounced. He made the profession of faith in the presence of the Ven. Archdeacon Russell, Archpriest Nevin, the Very Rev. Dean Kennedy, and the Rev. Father Williams. On the same day he gave the Papal Benediction, which was forwarded to his Grace some little time ago, by His Holiness the Pope, to the priests of his diocese. Dr. O'Connell was also present; and, on telling his Grace that his end was near, he said, 'It is the Will of God; let it be done. I'll pray for you before the throne of God. Jesus have mercy on me!' On the Monday morning the Archbishop was quite free from bodily pain, and his death is described as peaceful and beautiful. He remained quite conscious till about half an hour before the end came. *REQUIESCAT IN PACE!*"

The Archbishop was born in Dublin, July 25, 1834, and when quite young entered the Benedictine Abbey at Subiaco. He made his studies in Rome together with Cardinal Moran. Before he had made his religious profession he was removed to Western Australia, where the scarcity of priests was so great that he was ordained priest in 1860, and sent on the Mission. On November 5, 1873, he was consecrated Bishop of Adelaide by the venerable Archbishop Polding, having been Vicar-General since 1870. When he was Vicar-General, there were in the vast diocese of Adelaide 28,668 Catholics and 34 priests. When Dr. Reynolds died, although the bishopric of Port Augusta had been taken out of his diocese, there were in Adelaide 47,179 Catholics, with 110 churches. In 1887 Adelaide was raised to an archbishopric, and the new Archbishop received the pallium at the hands of his old friend Cardinal Moran on September 11, in his own Cathedral.

The see remained vacant during the remainder of 1893 and throughout the whole of 1894, and it was not until the beginning of 1895 that Dr. O'Reilly, Bishop of Port Augusta, was appointed Archbishop of Adelaide. However, the Sisters experienced much kindness from the priests, and especially from their true and constant father and friend, Dean Kennedy. Mr. MacDonald and his family were unremitting in their kindness and forethought. Their Church was nearly completed, and the windows were already in their places, when the High Altar, after many delays, arrived from England. It is of Caen stone, and was executed by Messrs. Boulton of Cheltenham, from the designs of Mr. Joseph Hansom. It was a generous gift from Mr. Aloysius MacDonald. One of the Sisters says:—

“He left the designing of it entirely to our dear Mother, and she wrote one of her sweet letters to Mr. Hansom, telling him how entirely she trusted to his good taste, and asking him to design subjects suitable to the Perpetual Adoration. We did not know what subjects he had chosen until the Altar came, but they are very appropriate. Mr. MacDonald says that if he ever has to order another Altar he shall certainly try and get Mr. Hansom to design it.”

The frontal represents the Last Supper, at the moment when Our Lord is instituting the Holy Eucharist. This is in an arched recess, the rest of the Altar front being carved in rich diaper-work. The tabernacle is surmounted by a pyramidal structure, terminated by a small cross. Behind it rises the throne, with an open-work canopy over it 17 feet high. On either side three decorated arches form a covering for

a *basso-relievo*, that on the Gospel side representing the miracle at the marriage-feast of Cana, while that on the Epistle side is the feeding of the five thousand—both well-known types of the Holy Eucharist. These sculptures are flanked by a graceful niche, whose spiral tabernacle-work rises above the rich cornice that completes the reredos.

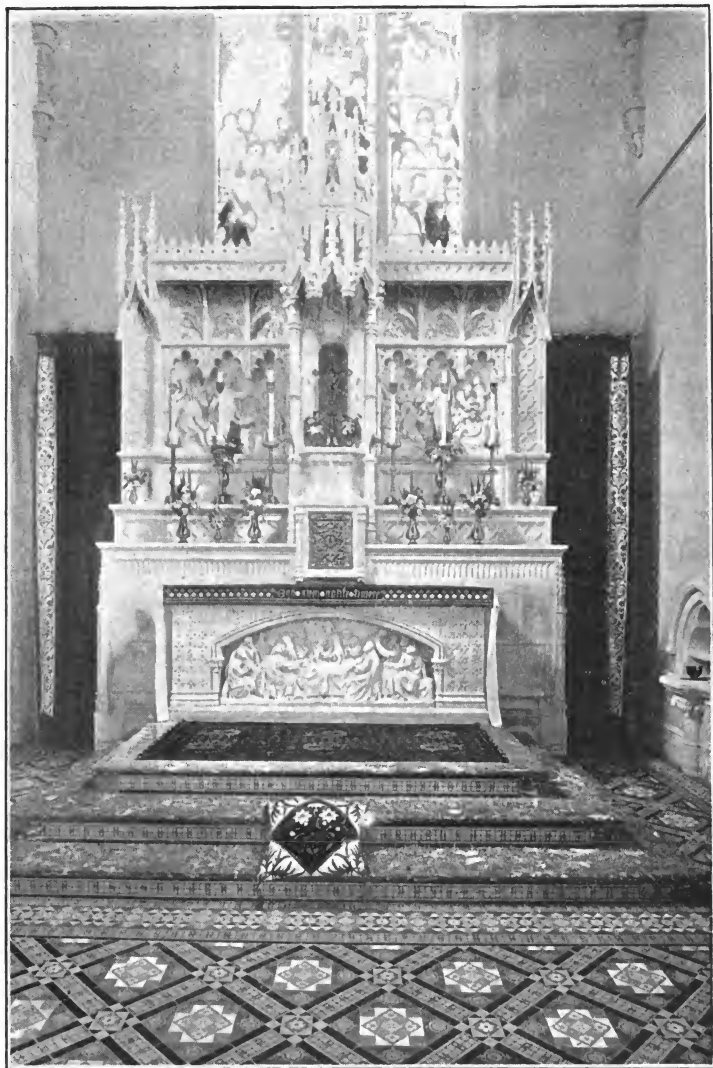
The nuns were delighted when they saw it, and so was their good benefactor. They write :—

“They say there is nothing like it in the Colonies, not even in Sydney Cathedral. . . . I don’t think any of us ever saw a more beautiful and devotional Altar. All the architects, sculptors, and artists in Adelaide have been to examine it; and are all of the same opinion, that it is the most perfect work ever erected in the Colonies. We all think Mother has had a hand in beautifying our little Chapel, and in some way or other has managed to assist those preparing the different works—just as, at the building of the Tabernacle, the Lord gave the artificers understanding and skill.”¹

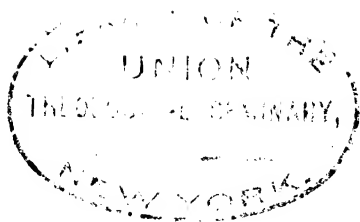
Early in July they began to dismantle their old room-chapel, in order to furnish the new one, and prepare for the opening. Still, however pleased they might be that Our Lord was to dwell in an abode somewhat more worthy of Him, there were recollections bound up with the old Chapel which could not be transferred to the new building. A Sister writes :—

“O what memories will be for ever connected with this room-chapel! Our first beginnings of Perpetual Adoration, and one revered figure, wasting away before Our Lord, and drawing nearer and nearer to Him, until at last there seemed almost nothing left to separate her any longer from Him!

¹ Exod. xxxvi. 1.



ALTAR OF PERPETUAL ADORATION, ADELAIDE.



Each time one thinks of our sweetest of Mothers gives one, so to say, 'a lift.' Everything about her so breathed of a perfect Religious, and one so intimately united with Our Lord. I do indeed feel privileged to have been allowed to live with such a holy Mother, and shall always feel grateful to Almighty God that He permitted me to be one of her first children in Adelaide.

"We have a great many applications for admission into our Community, and there seems a real and earnest desire among many souls to make reparation to Our Lord in the Blessed Sacrament. But unfortunately, almost all who apply have no means, and it is impossible to go on increasing our numbers, without any resources. Our Lord has been very good to us in supplying our wants, and that in the most unlooked-for way; but the building funds weigh very heavily upon us, and there are so many *necessary* extras in connection with the Chapel, that it is almost crushing. . . . I often wonder, when I look up at the Chapel, how we ever had courage to begin such a building. Our Lord must have wanted it to be built, otherwise we never could have ventured."

According to the *South Australian Register*, the new building consists of the choir and sanctuary, an outer choir, the Lady Chapel, and St. Dominic's Chapel, on either side of the sanctuary. On the west side are to be the cloisters, the bell-turret, and temporary sacristy. On the east the tribune, to which the public are admitted, the entrance porch, sacristy, and confessional. A staircase of kauri pine leads to the organ gallery, which is over the outer choir. The bell-turret is square at the base, and carried up until it is clear of the roof, and then the angles are cut off so as to make it octagonal for the belfry, which is lighted by eight open louvres, and surmounted by a stone spire and a

cross. The walls are of brown Teatree Gully free-stone, laid in random courses, with rough facings, and lined with hard bricks. The dressings, copings, and carved work are executed in Murray Bridge stone. The sanctuary is approached by two marble steps, and is paved with Minton's encaustic tiles, the floor of the choir being of kauri pine. The roof is open, and panelled in the sanctuary. There is a stone screen with open tracery between the choir and the outer choir. A few weeks after the opening Dr. Nevin's bell arrived, and was named "Dominic," as it rang the angelus for the first time after the first vespers of their Holy Patriarch's Feast. By a singular coincidence, no sooner had its deep tones died away than a most violent storm arose, and raged for twelve hours. It seemed as if "the prince of the power of the air" resented the call to prayer; but the tower was too well built to be affected by the tempest, and the neighbours have long ago got accustomed to the sound of the bell.

The solemn opening of the Church took place on Thursday, July 20, on which day was kept, in 1893, the Feast of the Translation of St. Dominic, so that the first Mass said in the Church was that of their Holy Father. The Very Rev. Dr. Byrne, Administrator of the Archdiocese, blessed the Church according to the ritual, and the Mass was sung by the Very Rev. Dean Kennedy, the Revs. F. O'Neill and P. Hurley being deacon and sub-deacon, and the Rev. W. M'Evoy was master of ceremonies. There were present also the Revs. Fathers M'Killop and Reschauer, S.J., J. Healy, J. B. M'Mahon, T. O'Neill, Gandolfi, Cornes,

and Williams, with Archpriest Nevin. The music was rendered by the nuns themselves. The little Church was filled by friends specially invited, and among those present were the Chief Justice, Lady Downer, Colonel and Mrs. Gordon, Captain Milner, Hon. J. V. O'Loughlin, M.L.C., Mr. T. Worsnop (Town Clerk), Mr. C. E. Owen Smyth (Superintendent of Public Buildings), Mr. and Mrs. A. MacDonald, Mr. and Mrs. Leahy, Mr. and Miss Woods, Mrs. and Miss Barr Smith, Mrs. and Miss Baker, Mrs. and Miss O'Halloran, Mrs. and Miss Peacock, and several other ladies and gentlemen who took an interest in the Sisters and their work.

The sermon was preached by the Very Rev. Dr Byrne, on the words "*Domum Dei decet sanctitudo : sponsum ejus Christum adoremus in ea*," the Invitatory for the Office of the Dedication of a Church, and the preacher explained the work of Adoration which was to be carried on perpetually in the building, now solemnly set apart for the worship of God.

The old Chapel was turned into a Refectory, and they found the benefit of the new Church in a variety of ways. Sometimes they climbed up the narrow staircase that led to the belfry, and the first time they went up they were quite astonished at the beauty of the scene. Being on an eminence, it commands an extensive view of the whole of Adelaide, and of the sea beyond. The cool fresh breezes made it quite a change of air for them.

Their numbers continued gradually to increase. In February, another postulant arrived, so that in March they were twenty-four altogether in Community. In May another postulant was received, and on August

17, the Feast of St. Hyacinth, two postulants were clothed, and two novices were professed.

The year 1894 brought its share of changes, some joyful, some sorrowful. April brought them a welcome visit from Mr. and Mrs. Arthur Mayo, whose daughter had gone out with them, and was their first novice. The same month also brought them the news of the elevation of the present writer to the bishopric of Clifton, entailing a considerable delay in the publication of this memoir. The same spring brought them the sad tidings of the illness of Mother Francis Raphael Drane, who had just completed the twelfth year of her office as Prioress Provincial of the English Congregation of St. Catherine. Each week brought intelligence of her failing strength, until the end came on April 30, the Feast of St. Catherine, whom she loved so dearly, and whose Life she had written so well.

When the two novices were professed in August, they little thought that the Novice Mistress Sister Mary Magdalene Ward was so soon to be called away. She was the eldest daughter of the late Dr. W. G. Ward, whose life, both as an Anglican and as a Catholic, has recently been so admirably written by his son. Mary Ward entered the novitiate at Stone in 1863, when she was only sixteen. Before that her brother says: "She had been the constant companion of her father's leisure hours for five years, and always attributed her early vocation to the religious life in great measure to his influence."¹

Her mother says of her: "She was a remarkable

¹ "W. G. Ward, and the Catholic Revival," p. 72: pp. 68-72, contain interesting reminiscences by her of her distinguished father.



CHURCH OF PERPETUAL ADORATION, ADELAIDE.

person, and saintlike almost from her cradle, when at three years old, she threw herself on the ground, and buried her little face in the earth as Our Lord passed across the College grounds." It was the result of her being in such close intimacy with a theological student and professor like her father, that the following story was told about her. Mother Margaret used to insist upon all her novices standing up and saying their Catechism like children. When Miss Ward entered the novitiate she had to do as the others did. She was talking to her companions afterwards about the *Penny Catechism*, and said what a wonderful little book it was. Her companion was rather surprised at her enthusiastic admiration, and said, "Did you never see a *Penny Catechism* before?" "No," she answered. "Have you never learned your religion?" "Oh yes, I learned it all in Suarez," she said, "but I never thought it could be got into such a little book as this."

Her religious life in England was passed at Stone, afterwards at St. Mary Church, where she was for five years, and at Stoke-upon-Trent, where she had charge of the Hospital. Then she volunteered for Adelaide, and was the first of the little band to declare her determination to live and die in Australia. She was Mistress of Novices, and had charge of the Library. Her last letter to me was an urgent petition for books, as she thought that, in the process of moving from Plymouth to Clifton, I might find some duplicates which would be useful to them. There was no sign in that letter of any failing of health, but it seems that in January she had a slight attack of influenza, which she never quite got rid

of. It was thought that a change of air would be good for her, and early in September she went with a companion to stay for a time with their kind friends Mrs. and Miss Baker. At first, the fresh air seemed to do her good, and she wrote quite brightly about herself. But later on she was not so well, and when she returned home on the 21st, she went to bed, and Dr. Cawley said that she had a large cavity in the left lung, and that she was in a consumption. On the 28th she received the last Sacraments, as she seemed much worse, though the Dean did not think her in immediate danger. She herself said, "I have had two great surprises to-day. First, in receiving the last Sacraments; and second, in hearing that I am going to die." A Sister writes:—

"She would have been glad to live longer, if it had been the Will of God; but she was perfectly content to die. She did not seem to have the very slightest fear. She was such a short time at Confession, and she said she was very happy; nothing seemed to give her the least trouble. She said to me: 'I used to think I should live for such a long time, and see what it has all come to.' She was very patient, and never uttered a complaint, though the fits of choking were terrible. She was perfectly conscious, and could make aspirations and speak up to the very end. She died quite quietly at about ten minutes to five on Sunday morning, September 30."

She was buried the next day, and laid by the side of Mother Rose Columba, and Sister Mary Erminilda. Only a month before, a young Dominican, Father Antoninus Byrne, O.P., had been laid in the same cemetery. He had come out as the last chance of saving his life. It was too late, and notwithstanding all the care bestowed upon him by the MacDonalds,

with whom he stayed as a guest, he died of consumption on August 13. Our Sisters were with him during his last moments, and they think he must have written to the Master-General about them, for the week after his death they received a beautiful Dominican Graduale from Rome, with the following words written in the General's own hand:—

“Dominus sit Adjutor et Protector Sororum
Ordinis Nostri in Adelaide : et det eis copias
Gratiarum et Benedictionum cœlestium !

F. ANDREAS FRÜHWERTH, *Mag. Gen.*

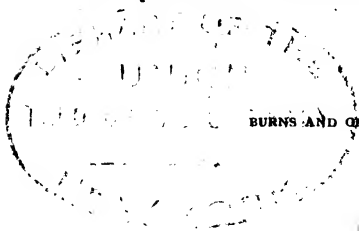
ROMAE, die 18 Julii, 1894.”

The year 1895 began with a severe cross to the Adelaide Community. Their first Australian subject, Sister Mary Catherine Adamson, was laid low by the influenza that has claimed so many victims all over the world, and it was deemed necessary that she should be anointed on Christmas Eve. She rallied for a time, but her lungs were fatally affected ; and, after lingering through the month of January, died on February 15. She had always said that she expected to live to be very old, as she was strong and active, and little did she think that, when she tolled the bell for the funeral of Mother Magdalene Ward, that she would follow her so soon. She had a great devotion to the Rosary ; and, when a novice, had asked leave to say it aloud with her companion while they were at their work. Besides the fifteen Mysteries said every day in Community, she would generally add another fifteen on her own account. When she was dying, she kept her beads in her hand

as long as she could hold them, and got those who nursed her to put her fingers on to the right bead. Her last words were "*Sancta Dei Genitrix ora pro nobis*," and she died while the last words of the *Salve Regina* were being sung around her bed. Fifteen hours before she died a wonderful look of spiritual beauty came over her face, and the sweet expression remained after death, the reflection of the innocence of her soul, and filled all those who saw her with consolation and joy. "*Lux æterna luceat ei, Domine, cum Sanctis tuis in æternum, quia pius es.*" R.I.P.

Now that we have seen the fulfilment of the two great objects for which the subject of this memoir laboured and suffered, the erection of a Church, made as worthy as loving devotion could make it for the dwelling-place of Him, whose delight is to be with the sons of men, and the filling up the ranks of a chosen band of ardent adorers, who will serve Him day and night in His temple, we take leave of Mother Rose Columba. We are sure that her name will never be forgotten by the Community at Adelaide. We have tried in these pages to place on record some of her beautiful words, and some features of her still more beautiful life. The great lesson of that life is best summed up in the words of her own glorious patroness, St. Rose of Lima:—

"If you would win heaven you must be generous, and labour hard, and suffer much: For the rewards which God hath promised are exceeding great."



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